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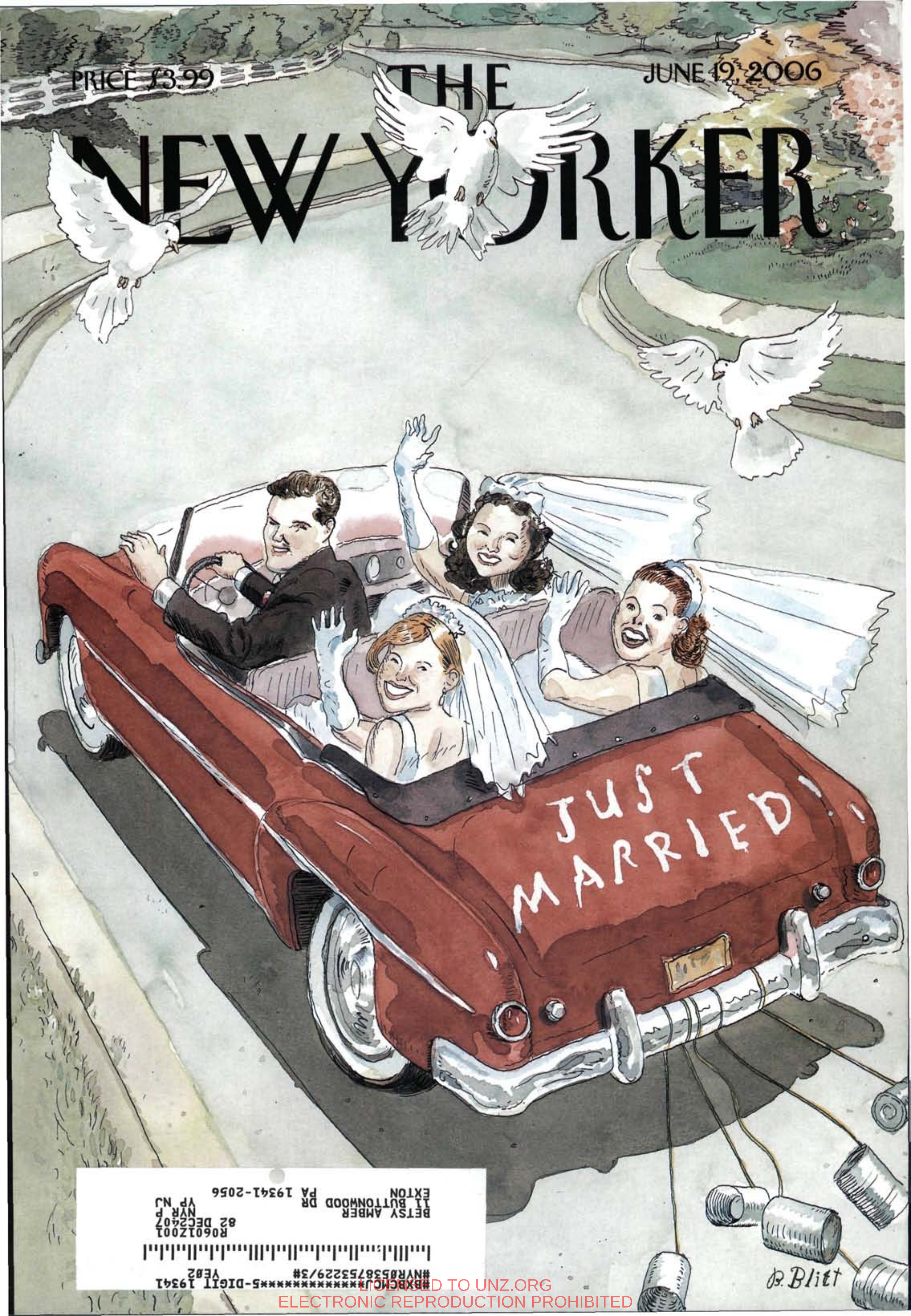
THE NEW YORKER

JUNE 19, 2006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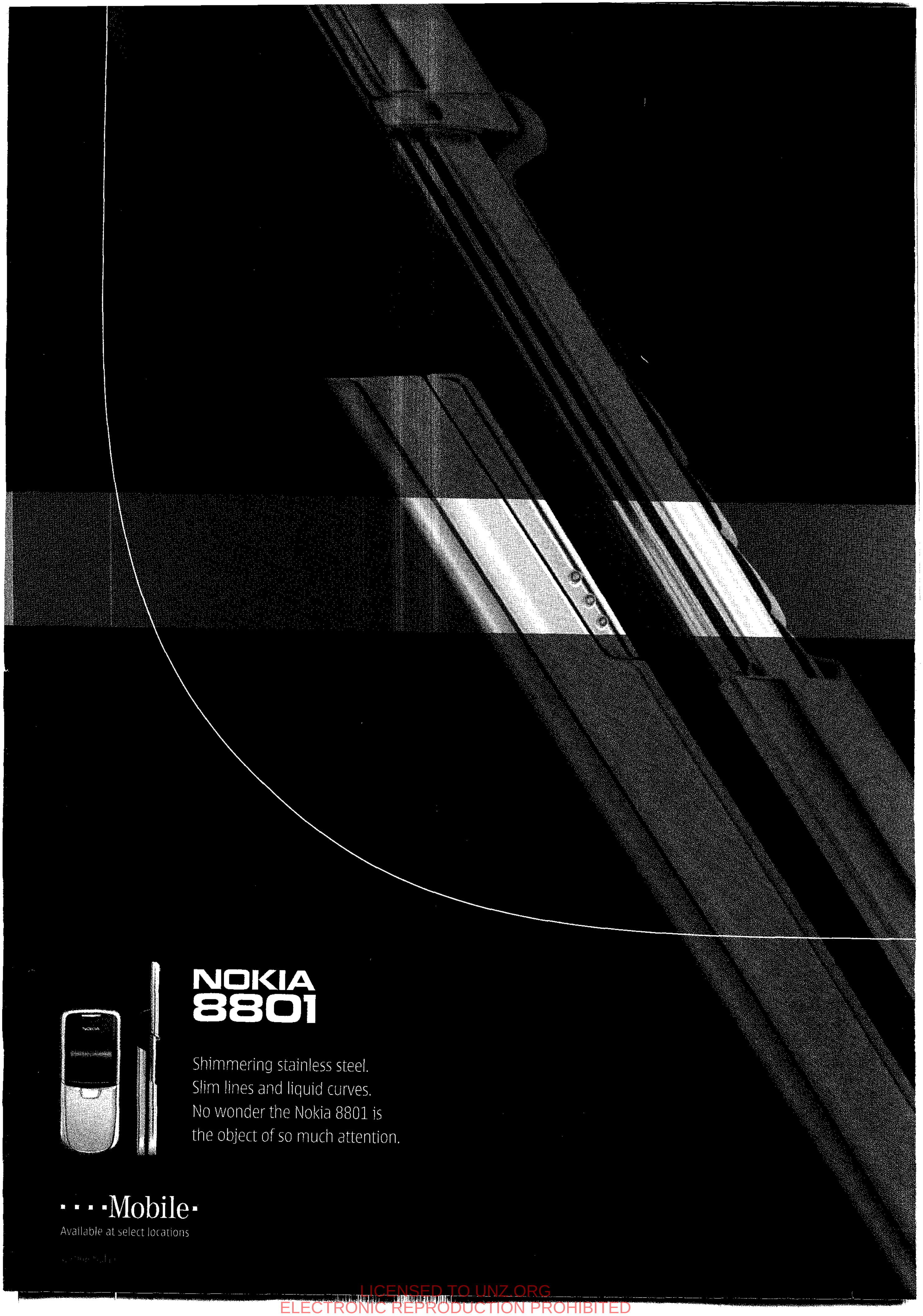

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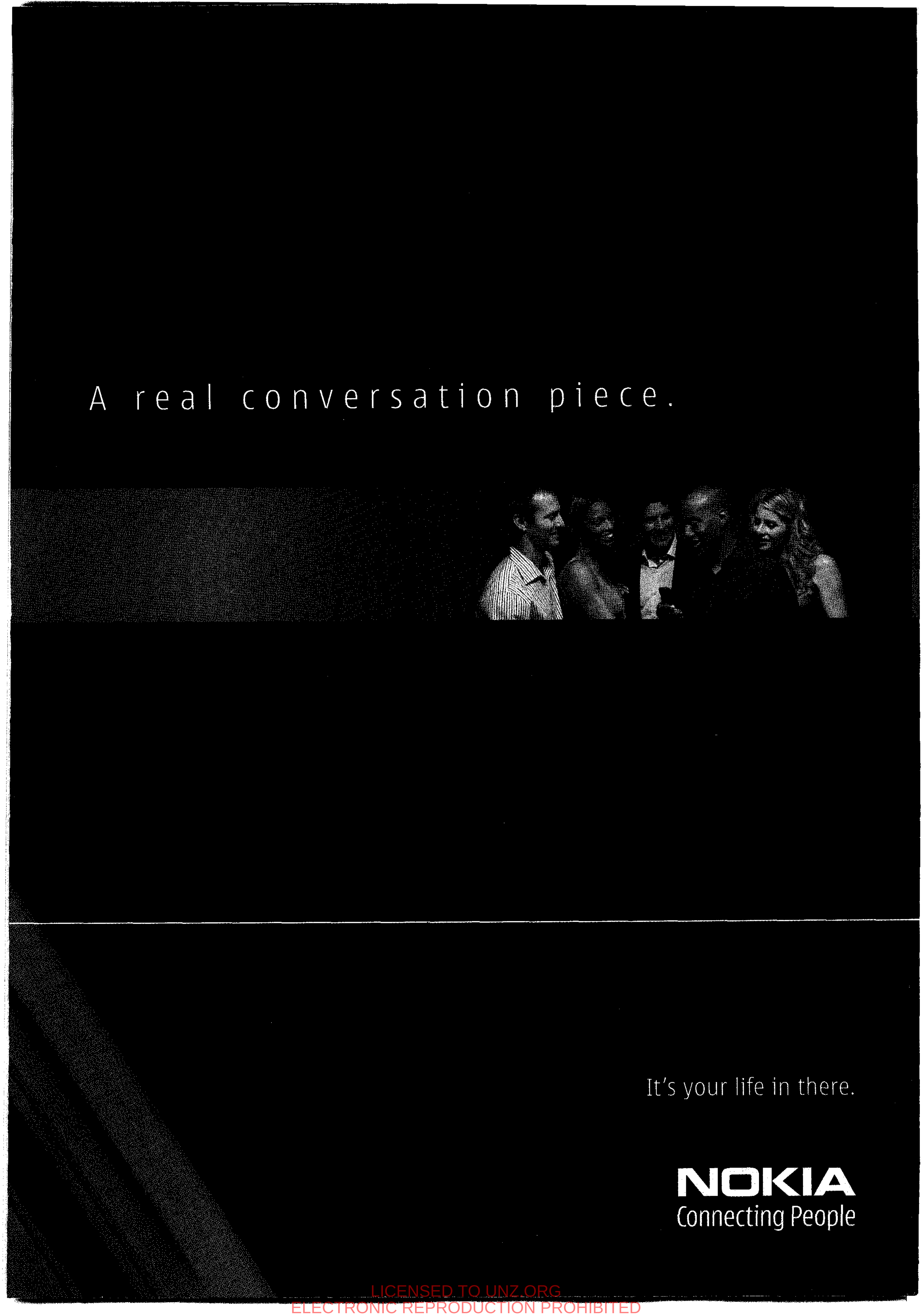
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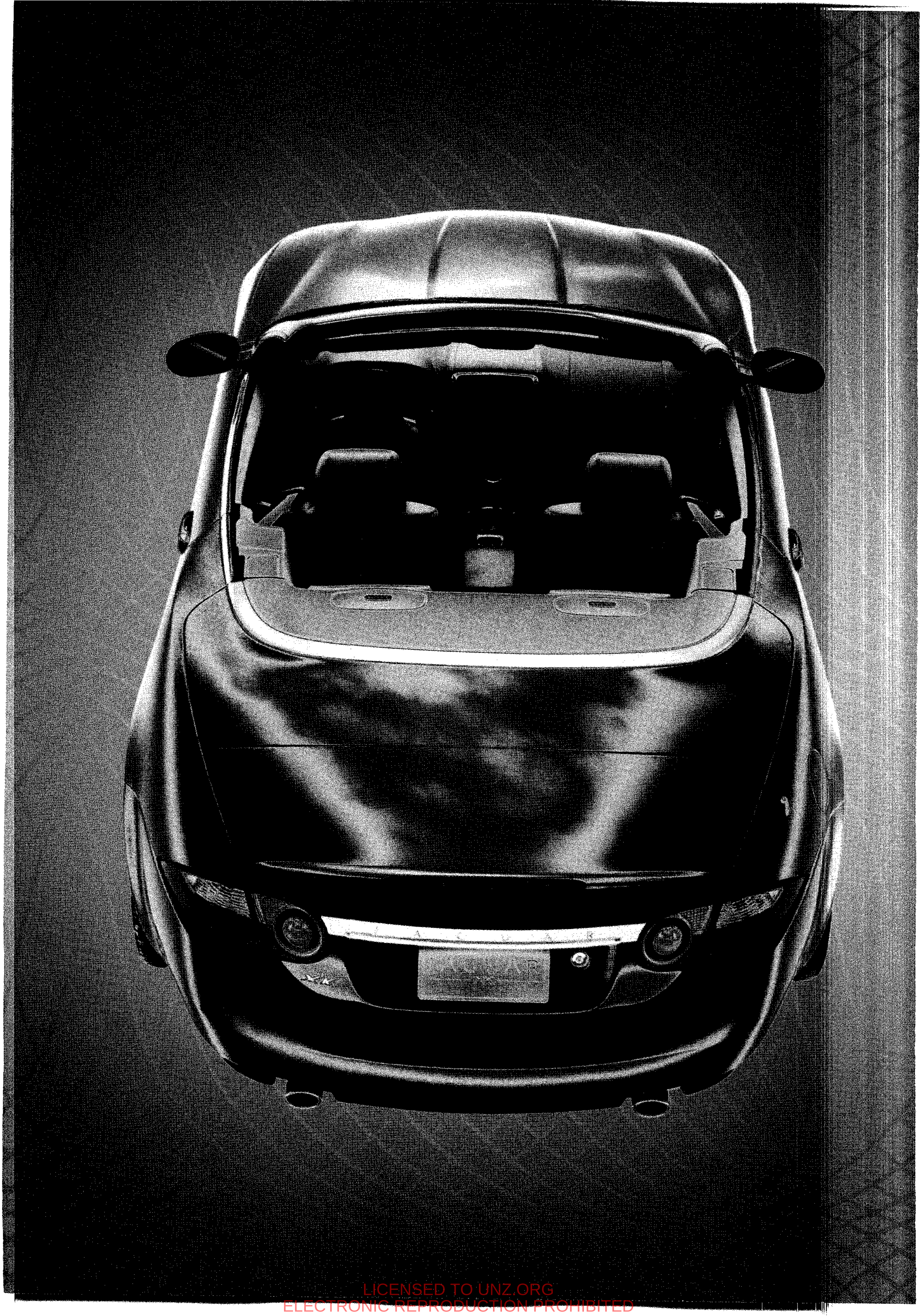
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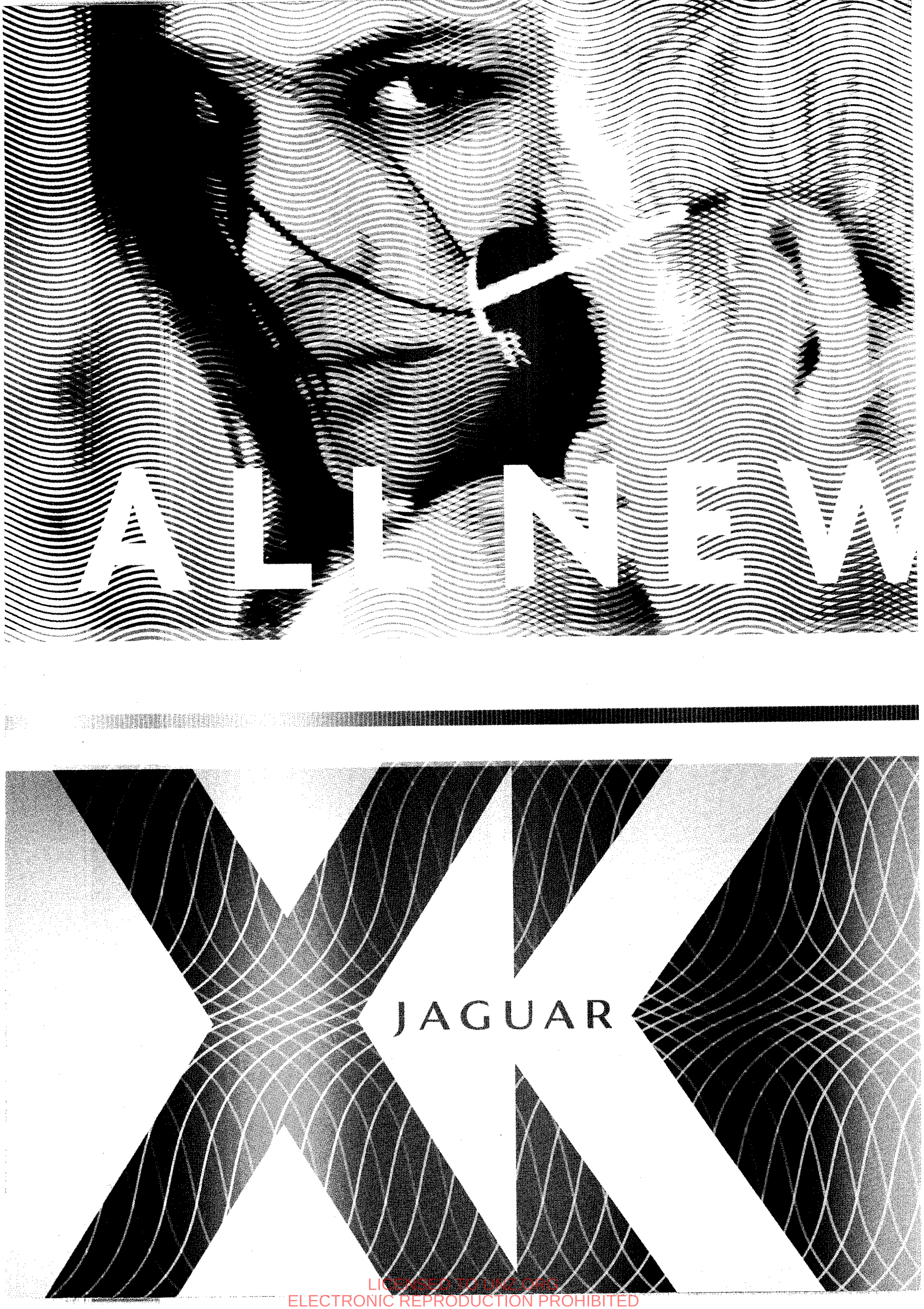
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CONTRIBUTORS

William Finnegan ("Watching the Waterfront," p. 52) has been a staff writer since 1987. His books include "A Complicated War" and "Cold New World."

Robert Polidori (Photograph, p. 52), a staff photographer, will publish a book about New Orleans, "After the Flood," in September.

Lawrence Wright (The Talk of the Town, p. 30) has a new book, "The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11," coming out in August.

D. T. Max ("The Injustice Collector," p. 34) is the author of "The Family That Couldn't Sleep," a scientific and cultural history of prion disease, which will be published in the fall.

Sophie Cabot Black (Poem, p. 42) has published two poetry collections, "The Misunderstanding of Nature" and "The Descent."

Oliver Sacks ("Stereo Sue," p. 64) practices neurology in New York City. He is the author of nine books, including "Awakenings" and "An Anthropologist on Mars," and is currently writing a book about music and the brain.

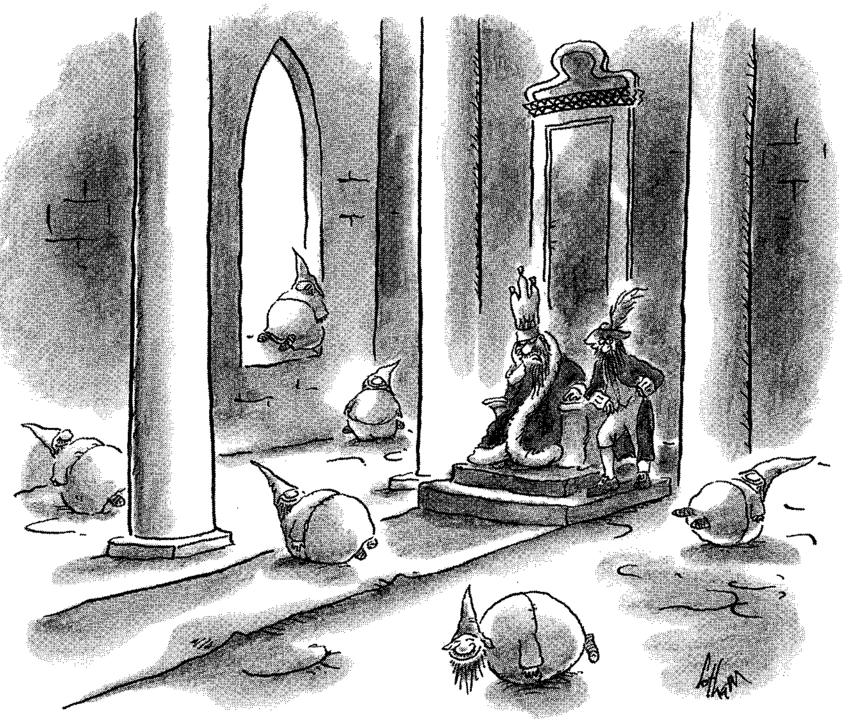
Galway Kinnell (Poem, p. 56) has a new book of poems, "Strong Is Your Hold," coming out in the fall.

Hilton Als ("The Cameraman," p. 46) is a staff writer.

Karen Russell (Fiction, p. 74) will publish her début collection of short stories, "St. Lucy's Home for Girls Raised by Wolves," in September.

Alex Ross (A Critic at Large, p. 84) is the magazine's music critic.

John Lahr (The Theatre, p. 92) published "Honky Tonk Parade: *New Yorker* Profiles of Show People" last October. ♦



"At least the peasants are fat and happy."

THE MAIL

PRIVATE SPIES

Benjamin Wallace-Wells's piece on Rita Katz and her private intelligence agency, the SITE Institute, raises some disturbing issues that were not fully explored ("Private Jihad," May 29th). As Wallace-Wells notes, Katz's "group doesn't check... the legitimacy of every threat," and, in fact, the increasing privatization of intelligence gathering, along with military action and prison administration, both here and abroad, results in a seriously troubling lack of accountability as well as potential human-rights abuses. Passionate amateurs such as Katz and Steven Emerson also undercut the ability of mainstream Muslim-American organizations to respond to the related challenges of extremism and backlash. Katz claims to know "how Arabs think" and sells shortcuts to the "terrorist mind," but more useful is the work of Olivier Roy and other serious sociologists of the diverse Muslim world. Wallace-Wells's piece would have benefitted greatly from the addition of critical comment from the Muslim community that might demonstrate that we are more than just objects of concern. Indeed, to many of us Katz's alarmist tactics seem to be a symptom of contemporary McCarthyism. When Wallace-Wells concludes that underestimating the threat is worse than overestimating it, we Muslims might tell you that misunderstanding the threat is even worse.
Adem Carroll
Muslim Consultative Network
Astoria, N.Y.

FOR THE BIRDS

John Seabrook's account of the ethical trespasses of the British ornithologist Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen illustrates the profound long-term importance of natural-history collections held in the public trust, even though contemporary throw-away habits put such collections at risk ("Ruffled Feathers," May 29th). Pinpointing the true origins of Asian specimens linked to his name would not have been possible without study skins kept for years in museums at a substantial cost. That these results were obtained in a time of bird-flu anxiety is significant. Digital images, DNA sequences, and other proxies for real specimens may not always provide answers to questions, especially unanticipated ones that demand immediate attention for medical or environmental reasons. The results of molecular studies must also be firmly anchored to specimens to insure repeatability, one tenet of the scientific method. Thus, the importance of natural-history collections will only increase as the world changes.
Norton G. Miller
Principal Scientist and Curator
Research and Collections
New York State Museum
Albany, N. Y.

Ornithologists consider the common names of birds to be proper nouns and thus capitalize the initial letters of the names in print, a practice that is universally shunned by non-ornithological publications. As an example of why bird names should be capitalized, I offer the caption to the photograph of the now infamous Colonel Meinertzhagen holding a "great bustard" that he procured near Nairobi. The bird is huge, perhaps even great, but it's not a Great Bustard (*Otis tarda*), which occurs only in Eurasia. Rather, it's a Kori Bustard (*Ardeotis kori*), which is still relatively easy to encounter on the plains of East Africa. One would assume that Meinertzhagen, despite his many flaws, knew which species he'd shot, and that the confusion arose from the difficulty in distinguishing a descriptive name from a technical one without the aid of a capital letter.
Jeff Marks
Director of Bird Conservation
Montana Audubon
Missoula, Mont.

•

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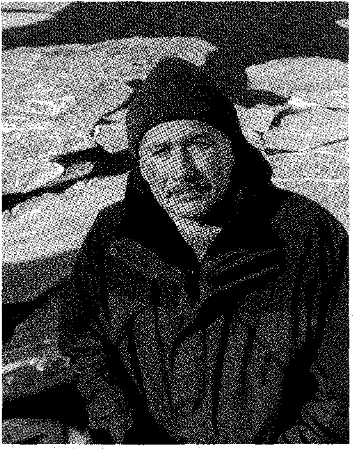
The world is watching the Gray Whales of Sakhalin.



Alexander Rutenko is also listening.

The feeding grounds of the endangered Western Gray Whales are close to Sakhalin II, one of the world's largest energy construction projects. So Dr Alexander Rutenko is monitoring underwater noise as part of a team of scientific experts working with Sakhalin Energy – a Shell-led joint venture – to minimize the project's impact on the whales. Find out more at **shell.com/alexander**

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
18	19	20	14	15	16	17

THIS WEEK

THE THEATRE
TO BE KING

The Actors' Shakespeare Project and La Mama present "King Lear," with Alvin Epstein in the lead role, in an acclaimed production that originated in Boston. Farther uptown, in Central Park, the Public's Shakespeare in the Park staging of "Macbeth" stars Liev Schreiber. (See page 10.)

NIGHT LIFE
FINAL VISION

For the past seventeen years, the saxophonist David S. Ware has stirred up a free-jazz ruckus with a quartet featuring the pianist Matthew Shipp, the bassist William Parker, and a cadre of drummers that have included Susie Ibarra. Now Ware is dismantling the group; it closes the downtown avant-garde music gathering known as the Vision Festival. Expect high spirits and full-force sonics. (See page 14.)

ART
NO SWISS MISS

Most of the paintings and pastels by the Swiss artist Jean-Étienne Liotard (1702-89) are in Geneva museums, limiting opportunities for Americans to get to know his lively, bright works. The Frick's new exhibition, built around its own "Trompe l'Oeil" and supplemented with loans from Swiss museums and collections, opens this week. (See page 14.)

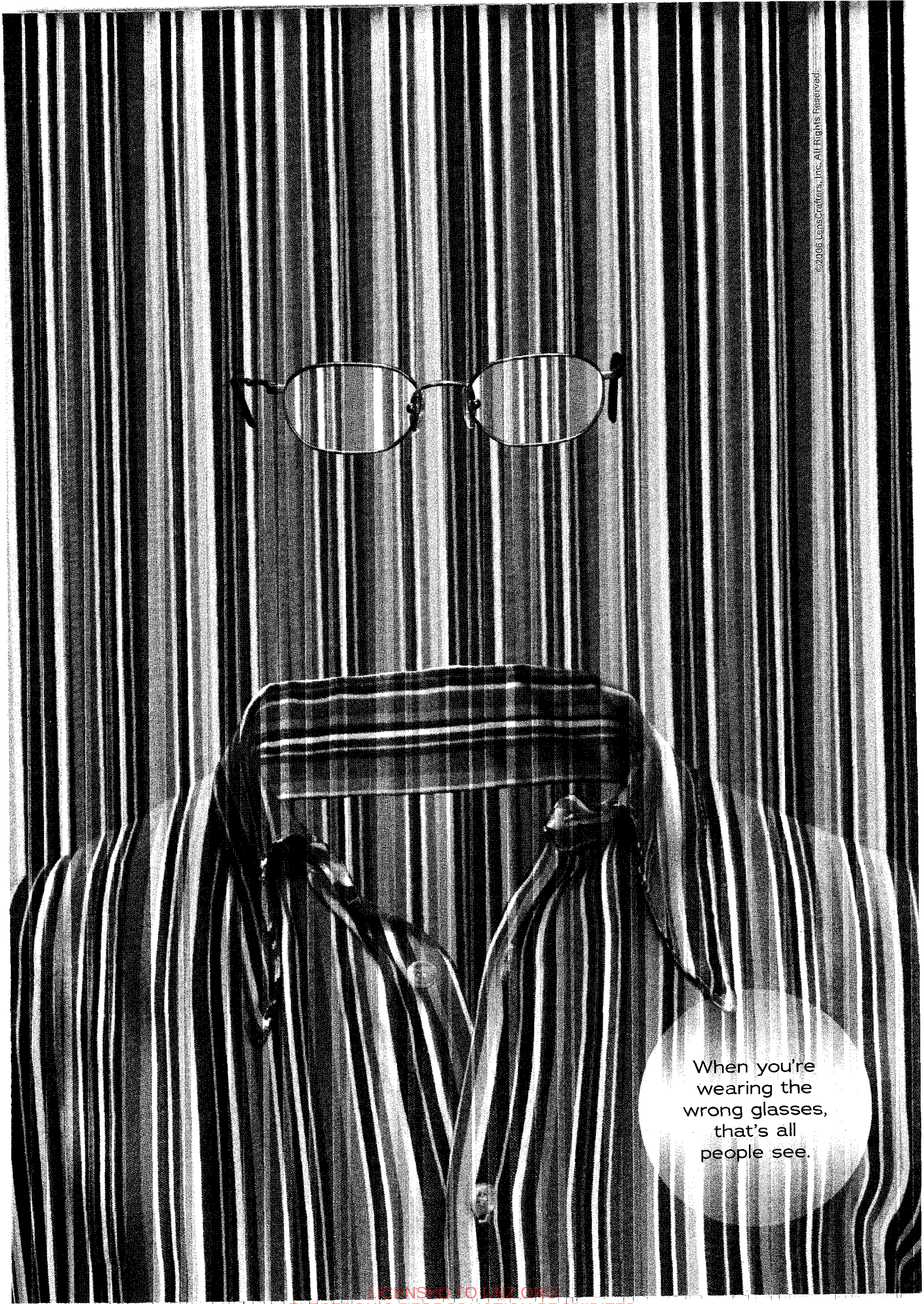
CLASSICAL MUSIC
INTIMATE NOTES

When a viola is added to a string quartet, the resulting sound has a mysterious richness and complexity. Brahms and Mozart, not surprisingly, wrote the greatest works in the genre, two of which will be played by the violist Toby Appel and the Amernet String Quartet this week at Music Mountain. (See page 22.)

MOVIES
LULU'S BACK IN TOWN

Despite the stodgy direction of G. W. Pabst, "Pandora's Box," a German silent film from 1929, at Film Forum, is a classic, purely on the basis of Louise Brooks's performance as Lulu, the wild demimondaine whose fierce survival instinct destroys her admirers and her enemies alike. (See page 25.)

Richard Serra's "Elevations, Repetitions," at Gagosian. Photograph by Gus Powell.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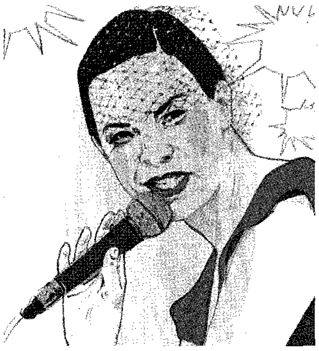
CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
BY A THREAD



The French singer and songwriter Camille could take the easy road into America. She is strikingly beautiful, all cheekbones and clear skin, and her voice is known to U.S. audiences because of her singing on the first album by Nouvelle Vague, which turned chestnuts of New Wave and punk into docile, stylish bossa-nova numbers. A conservative singer would release a breathy album of polite numbers sung in English and swoop into America as La Chanteuse. This is not Camille's plan. Her 2005 French-language album, "Le Fil," is being released in America, and she is performing two shows at Joe's Pub, on June 12th and 13th. *Le fil* ("the thread") refers to a B-natural drone that plays through the whole album. The songs are built around noises that Camille makes with her mouth and body: clicks, slaps, and hoots that are only sometimes supposed to be funny. The names Björk and Bobby McFerrin will come up, and they aren't inaccurate reference points. Imagine a synthesis of the two, comfortable with the ridiculous and able to elicit an unexpected range of beauty from the human voice.

—*Sasha Frere-Jones*

THE THEATRE
OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.

BIG SHOOT
Koffi Kwahulé's drama details the relationship between an interrogator and his suspect. Gabriella Maione directs. In previews. (Culture Project, 45 Bleecker St. 212-307-4100.)

THE BUSY WORLD IS HUSHED
Jill Clayburgh stars in a new play by Keith Bunin, in which the buried past of a theologian is discovered. Mark Brokaw ("The Constant Wife") directs. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

CLEAN
A new comedy by Bob Epstein, about a young socialite who attempts to clear her father of charges of white-collar crimes. Previews begin June 16. Opens June 19. (Urban Stages, 259 W. 30th St. 212-868-4444.)

GETTING HOME
Anton Dudley's play, about the adventures of three Manhattan denizens, has its world première. In previews. Opens June 15. (McGinn/Cazale, Broadway at 76th St. 212-246-4422.)

GODOT HAS LEFT THE BUILDING
John Griffin wrote this comedy, in which two men try to make sense of the modern world. Previews begin June 16. (45 Below, 45 Bleecker St. 212-352-3101.)

THE HOUSE IN TOWN
Richard Greenberg's new play examines the marriage of a couple living on New York City's Millionaires' Row in 1929. Doug Hughes directs. In previews. Opens June 19. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200.)

KING LEAR
Alvin Epstein stars in the Actors' Shakespeare Project's production. Patrick Swanson directs. Previews begin June 16. Opens June 19. (La Mama Annex, 74A E. 4th St. 212-475-7710.)

MACBETH
The first offering of the Public Theatre's Shakespeare in the Park season stars Liev Schreiber in the title role. Moisés Kaufman directs. In previews. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 212-539-8750.)

PIG FARM
Roundabout Theatre Company's latest enterprise is a new comedy from the team behind "Urinetown," the writer Greg Kotis and the director John Rando, about pigs and sustainable agriculture. In previews. (Laura Pels, 111 W. 46th St. 212-719-1300.)

SATELLITES
Michael Greif directs a new play by Diana Son, about an interracial couple who move into a gentrifying Brooklyn neighborhood. The ensemble cast includes Sandra Oh. In previews. Opens June 18. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 212-239-6200.)

SCHOOL OF THE AMERICAS
Labyrinth Theatre Company and the Public Theatre present the world première of a new play by José Rivera (who wrote "The Motorcycle Diaries"), about the Bolivian government's imprisonment of Che Guevara. Previews begin June 20. (425 Lafayette St. 212-239-6200.)

SINGLE BLACK FEMALE
The première of Lisa Thompson's comedy about young middle-class black women in search of mates. Previews begin June 15. Opens June 17. (Peter Jay Sharp, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

SPRING AWAKENING
Atlantic Theatre Company presents the world première of a new musical adapted from Frank Wedekind's novel about the secret lives of teenagers. With music by Duncan Sheik and book and lyrics by Steven Sater. Michael Mayer directs. In previews. Opens June 15. (336 W. 20th St. 212-239-6200.)

SUSAN AND GOD
The Mint Theatre Company revives Rachel Crothers's 1937 play, about a newly religious socialite who attempts to convert those around her. In previews. Opens June 18. (311 W. 43rd St. 212-315-0231.)

TAILS
A new musical about five dogs in a pound awaiting adoption. In previews. Opens June 18. (45th Street Theatre, 354 W. 45th St. 212-352-3101.)

TREASON
Sallie Bingham's new play examines the lives of Ezra Pound and five women who were important to him. Martin Platt directs. In previews. Opens June 15. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 212-868-4444.)

THE WATER'S EDGE
Kate Burton and Tony Goldwyn star in a new play by Theresa Rebeck, in which a woman and her children are paid an unwelcome visit by her ex-husband. Directed by Will Frears. In previews. Opens June 14. (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 212-246-4422.)

NOW PLAYING

AIN'T SUPPOSED TO DIE A NATURAL DEATH
A homeless woman (Kimberlee Monroe) wanders among the tables at the club T New York, locking eyes with the audience members. Hookers, cops, pimps, transsexuals, naïfs, and lovers populate this revival of Melvin Van Peebles's 1971 play, originally a hit on Broadway. Under the direction of Alfred Preisser, the gritty vignettes unfold everywhere at once, a late-sixties stewpot of Harlem on the verge of boiling over. The actors work the room like street-corner griots, their words accompanied by insistent funk music. Van Peebles's parade of gangstas, lovers, revolutionaries, and victims may approach ghetto stereotypes, but the effect of all this life force in an intimate space is mesmerizing. (240 W. 52nd St. 212-352-3101.)

ARABIAN NIGHT
Trip Cullman directs this urban fairy tale by Roland Schimmelpfennig, in which five strangers come together on a summer evening. (East 13th Street Theatre, 136 E. 13th St. 212-279-4200.)

BURLEIGH GRIME$
Wendie Malick and Mark Moses star in a new comedy by Roger Kirby, about a Wall Street up-and-comer. With music by David Yazbek. David Warren directs. (New World Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200.)

ELVIS AND JULIET
The New York première of a new comedy by Mary Willard, about the crazy families of an engaged couple. Fred Willard stars. (June Havoc, 312 W. 36th St. 212-868-4444.)

THE FIELD
Ciarán O'Reilly's burnished revival of John B. Keane's 1964 drama takes place in a lamplit pub in a chilly corner of Ireland, where the spirited, sly-witted locals gather to drink and banter. But, when a destitute widow attempts to sell her field to a rich outsider, a violent-tempered farmer (the riveting Marty Maguire) exploits the venal underside of the ties that bind the villagers together. Even pangs of Catholic conscience can't overcome the raw drive for food, shelter, and companionship that leads each man to make ugly compromises with his soul. (Irish Repertory, 132 W. 22nd St. 212-727-2737.)

IN THE MATTER OF J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER
Heinar Kipphardt's docudrama, based on the scientist's attempts to clear himself of being considered a Communist sympathizer. (Connelly, 220 E. 4th St. 212-868-4444.)

JAYSON WITH A Y
The New Group (Naked) presents a drama by Darci Picoult, about a pair of sisters struggling over which of them will care for their orphaned nephew, who has Asperger's syndrome. (Lion, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

NOTHING
Andrea Hart's adaptation of Henry Green's book, a satire about two capricious upper-class English families, is part of the "Brits Off Broadway" series. (59E59, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200.)

THE PORCH
In this drama by Kari Floren, a group of strangers, each with a midlife crisis in progress, arrive at a bed-

RACHEL DOMM

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and-breakfast in the tranquil West Virginia mountains, only to find that—guess what—you can't escape your problems with a weekend getaway. You can, however, solve them overnight, at least at these lodgings. Floren's clichéd characters (a high-strung career woman, a fluttery gay dancer) are about as worn as the rustic old inn itself; only Don Harvey, as the mysterious grouch who runs the B. and B., is able to hint at something beyond the script's self-improvement psychologizing. (Altered Stages, 212 W. 29th St. 212-279-4200.)

SOME GIRL(S)
Maura Tierney, Eric McCormack, and Fran Drescher star in a new play by Neil LaBute. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 212-279-4200.)

STOPPING TRAFFIC
The title of this one-woman show, written and performed by Mary Pat Gleason, refers to one of her many bipolar delusions, which she describes at some length in her canter through her tortured life. Imagining delusions is a bit like looking at a child's drawings: a pleasure that palls in a heartbeat. Although Gleason, who has had a solid career as a character actress in film and TV, is a large lady (with a mop of curly hair—a sort of behemoth Orphan Annie), she cannot fill the stage. Neither her story nor her presence compels attention, a fact underlined by the frenetic, clumsy direction of Lonny Price, who seems to have got paid by the number of lighting changes. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 212-353-0303.)

OUT OF TOWN

HELLO, DOLLY!
Tovah Feldshuh stars in the 1964 Tony-winning musical, at the Paper Mill Playhouse. (Millburn, N.J. 973-376-4343.)

HUDSON VALLEY SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL
The festival opens with "A Midsummer Night's Dream," directed by Terrence O'Brien. Starting July 19, "The Rivals," directed by Gia Forakis, runs in repertory. Opens June 14. (Garrison, N.Y. For more information, visit www.hvshakespeare.org. 845-265-9575.)

Also Playing

AWAKE AND SING!: Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **BILLY CONNOLLY LIVE!:** 37 Arts, 450 W. 37th St. 212-307-4100. Through June 17. **BRIDGE & TUNNEL:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **THE DROWSY CHAPERONE:** Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 212-307-4100. **THE HISTORY BOYS:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **THE LIEUTENANT OF INISHMORE:** Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **THE PAJAMA GAME:** American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300. Through June 17. **RED LIGHT WINTER:** Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 212-239-6200. **SWEENEY TODD:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200. **[TITLE OF SHOW]:** Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 212-353-0303. **WAITING FOR GODOT:** H.S.A. Theatre, 645 St. Nicholas Ave., near 141st St. 212-868-4444. **THE WEDDING SINGER:** Al Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.

NIGHT LIFE
ROCK AND POP

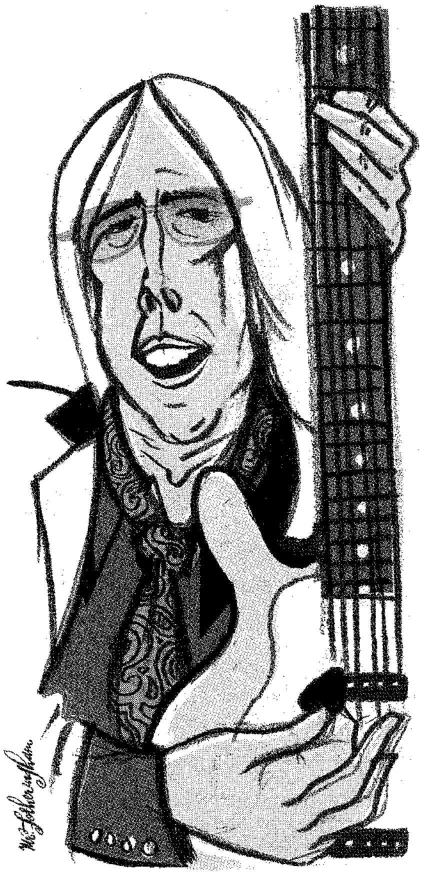
Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.

B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—June 16: **Chuck Berry,** one of rock and roll's founding fathers, is in town. He's backed by **Papa Grows Funk,** a young (or, at least, younger) band from New Orleans. June 17-18: The Springsteen cronies **Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes.**

BOWERY BALLROOM
6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—June 17: **Mr. Lif** is a favorite of fans of underground hip-hop, and it's easy to see why: his aggressively political rhymes are made palatable by a flow and a sense of timing that are missing from much of indie hip-hop.

CARNEGIE HALL
57th St. at Seventh Ave. (212-247-7800)—June 14-15: **Rufus Wainwright,** backed by a forty-piece orchestra, performs the entire set list of Judy Garland's famed 1961 Carnegie concert.

CELEBRATE BROOKLYN!
Prospect Park Band Shell, Prospect Park W. at 9th St. (718-855-7882, ext. 45)—The outdoor concerts get under way on June 15, with the saxophonist **Maceo Parker,** a veteran of James Brown's legendary JBs and a pivotal member of the Parliament/Funkadelic empire. June 16: A night of rock *en español* with **Tiempo Libre, Javier García,** and the **Cuban Cowboys.** June 17: The musician and performance artist **Laurie Anderson** is joined by the Tuvan throat singers **Chirgilchin.**



Tom Petty, at Madison Square Garden.

CENTRAL PARK SUMMERSTAGE
Rumsey Playfield, mid-Park at 72nd St. (212-360-2777)—This seasonal concert series consistently programs imaginative shows, and this year is no different. It starts on June 16, with a night of new jazz featuring the guitarist **Charlie Hunter** and the drummer **Bobby Previte,** a pair of sonic adventurers who call themselves Groundtruther when they perform together. They'll be joined by **Elliott Sharp.** The rest of the bill features **Matthew Shipp, Nils Petter Molvaer,** and **Sex Mob.** June 17: The down-home sounds of **Rhett Miller,** of the Old 97's, the singer-songwriter **Teddy Thompson,** and the local gospel-tinged ensemble **Ollabelle.** June 18: The Algerian singer and guitarist **Takfarinas.** With **Chris Berry,** a California native who grew up to master the mbira (thumb piano), and his dance-happy band, **Panjea.**

"EAST RIVER MUSIC PROJECT"
This free summer concert series devoted to mostly local acts starts on June 17, with **Meneguar, Human Television, Mobius Band,** and **Saturday Looks Good to Me.** (East River Park Amphitheatre, Grand St. at the East River. For more information, visit www.eastrivermusicproject.com.)

JOE'S PUB
425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—June 12-13: The captivating French singer **Camille.** June 15-17: The hip cultural archeologists of the **Loser's Lounge** sift through the back catalogue of Abba. June 18: The singer-songwriter **Nellie McKay** winds down her Sunday-night residency. June 20: The Irish rocker **Katell Keineg** stops by for the night.

KNITTING FACTORY
74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (212-219-3055)—June 18: Murray Hill, the self-described "hardest-working middle-aged man in show business," hosts the sixth annual **"Miss Lez Pageant,"** a not entirely tongue-in-cheek beauty contest for gay women. June 19-20: The **Legendary Pink Dots** have a slightly silly name, and you can be forgiven for not having heard of them even though they've spent a quarter century producing dark psychedelic rock. The Amsterdam-based group never found a place on the radio or the record charts, but they have a devoted group of fans, who will be rewarded with a pair of twenty-fifth-anniversary shows.

MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
Seventh Ave. at 33rd St. (212-307-7171)—June 20: **Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers.** One of the more conventional bands to blossom during the heyday of New Wave, Petty's band has evolved into one of the tightest groups in rock music.

"MIDSUMMER NIGHT SWING"
June 20: Fresh from Los Angeles, the **Jonathan Stout Orchestra,** featuring the vocalist **Hilary Alexander,** kicks off the alfresco dancing on the plaza at Lincoln Center. (212-721-6500. Through July 22.)

S.O.B.'S
204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (212-243-4940)—June 15: **Basement Bhangra,** a long-running monthly party featuring ecstatic dance music that fuses the feeling of an ancient Punjabi harvest festival with the technological wonders of underground London, welcomes **MC Kabir,** a politically conscious rapper from Cambridge, Massachusetts, who also happens to be the son of the Nobel Prize-winning economist Amartya Sen.

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

BIRDLAND
315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080)—June 13-17: The singer and composer **Kurt Elling** wraps atypical vocal phrases around dense poetic and philosophical allusions.

COOPER UNION
Third Ave. at 7th St. (212-279-4200)—June 18: The vocalist and actress **Capathia Jenkins** is joined by the Broadway veteran **Darius de Hass.** Jenkins's collaborator, the composer **Louis Rosen,** has written new songs for the evening, based on the works of Langston Hughes.

JAZZ GALLERY
290 Hudson St., near Spring St. (212-242-1063)—June 20-21: The **Lee Konitz** trio. Konitz, a saxophonist who can transform deliberation into passion, flourishes in the lean company of bass and drums.

JAZZ STANDARD
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—June 13-18: **Lee Konitz** (see the Jazz Gallery, above) also has a taste for fully fleshed-out ensembles. **Ohad Talmor,** a younger saxophone acolyte, directs a nonet that draws inspiration from the breadth of Konitz's work. June 20: The guitarist **Leni Stern** is a New York City favorite who deserves wider recognition.

JVC JAZZ FESTIVAL
The big-name gathering continues this week. A few highlights follow. June 15: The **Andrew Hill** trio, at the Studio Museum in Harlem. (144 W. 125th St.) June 16: **Ornette Coleman** and his quartet, at Carnegie Hall. June 19: A tribute to Lorraine Gordon and the Village Vanguard, with the **Bad Plus, Roy Hargrove, Paul Motian,** and others, at Carnegie Hall. Also on June 19: An eightieth-birthday celebration for the guitarist **Bucky Pizzarelli,** at Kaye Playhouse. (Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St.) June 20: The blues singers **Etta James** and **Susan Tedeschi**

EDWIN FOTHERINGHAM

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hold court at Carnegie Hall. The same night, **Brad Mehldau** gives a solo piano performance downstairs, at Zankel Hall. (For more information, visit www.festivalproductions.net. Through June 24.)

VILLAGE VANGUARD
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—June 13-18: **Guillermo Klein's Los Guachos** is not your grandfather's big band. The Argentinean-born composer and arranger stocks it with new-jazz players and interprets edgy charts that incorporate fusion, classical, and world-music elements.

VISION FESTIVAL
The annual downtown celebration of avant-garde jazz continues on June 14, with a tribute to the saxophonist **Sam Rivers.** It includes his Rivbea Orchestra, his trio, and the **Grachan Moncur III** quartet. Other festival highlights follow. June 15: The British trombonist **Paul Rutherford** and the duo of **George Lewis** and **Bill Dixon.** June 18: Following performances by **Kidd Jordan** and **Whit Dickey,** the festival concludes with the final U.S. appearance of the saxophonist **David S. Ware's** celebrated quartet, featuring **William Parker** and **Matthew Shipp.** (Angel Orensanz Center, 172 Norfolk St. For more information, visit www.visionfestival.org.)

TABLES FOR TWO
DEGUSTATION

239 E. 5th St. (212-979-1012)—Jack and Grace Lamb opened Degustation in April, next to their upscale sushi restaurant, Jewel Bako; while the O.E.D. says that "degust" means "to taste attentively," and, in French, a *menu dégustation* is a tasting menu, this spot might be better described as sushi-does-tapas. The tiny room seats about sixteen at a sushi-style counter, where diners can watch Wesley Genovart, a talented young Spanish chef, and a couple of busy assistants produce their somewhat finicky dishes. One suspects that the Lambs simply hope to find a viable use for the room, which was previously occupied by their short-lived ventures Jewel Bako Robata (a Japanese grill joint) and Grace's Kalbi Bar (a Korean grill joint). Still, Genovart produces food that is striking and occasionally inspired.

A *croqueta* that arrives as an *amuse-bouche* is a sign of what is to come. Sitting in a teardrop of paprika aioli, the size of a cherry and as light as cotton candy, it has a delicately crunchy exterior that gives way to a creamy bacon filling. Among the smaller offerings—there's no absolute distinction between appetizers and main courses—the fried baby artichoke, which comes with a Kumamoto oyster, mussel broth, and grapefruit foam, is a persuasive exercise in opposing textures (from crispy to slimy) and tastes (from briny to citrus). The slow-poached egg with Serrano ham in herbed chicken broth is less rewarding. Despite the care lavished on it—forty-five temperature-controlled minutes in the immersion circulator—the result hardly surpasses chicken soup with a soft-boiled egg in it. Innovation has its excesses, too, in the larger dishes, but the successes easily outnumber the failures. The most satisfying of these is grilled squid stuffed with short ribs and served alongside chorizo-tinged lentils; and the sliced pan-roasted pork belly, sturdy dominoes of fat, is wonderfully offset by a bed of shimeji mushrooms, scallions, and pickled jalapeños.

The main drawback to serving tapas as you would sushi is that diners may leave the restaurant hungry. What else can one expect from a menu on which the largest item is quail? But the effects of scarcity can provide their own entertainment: on a recent night, the conversation of a nearby couple turned, as if with some subconscious prompting, to the occult joys of late-night cereal binges. (Open daily for dinner. Dishes $4-$18.)

—Leo Carey

ART
MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-535-7710)—**"Girodet: Romantic Rebel,"** a retrospective of paintings and works on paper by the French artist Anne-Louis Girodet-Trioson (1767-1824). Through Aug. 27. ♦ **"The Art of Betty Woodman."** Through July 30. ♦ **"Cai Guo-Qiang on the Roof: Transparent Monument."** The roof garden has reopened for the summer, with four sculptural works by the Chinese-born artist. Among them are "Clear Sky Black Cloud," a timed gunpowder explosion that produces a small cloud of smoke over Central Park each day at noon. Through Oct. 29. ♦ **"Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh."** Through July 9. ♦ **"Kara Walker at the Met: After the Deluge."** Through July 30. ♦ **"Anglo-Mania: Tradition and Transgression in British Fashion."** Through Sept. 4. ♦ **"Warriors of the Himalayas: Rediscovering the Arms and Armor of Tibet."** Through July 2. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400)—There are some heavy hitters in **"Since 2000: Printmaking Now"**—Richard Tuttle, William Kentridge, Andrea Zittel, Matthew Barney—but the show belongs to young artists playing fast and loose with the adaptable but labor-intensive, somewhere-between-mechanical-and-handmade idea of the print. Kelley Walker lays bright tangles of ink onto black-and-white nineteen-seventies ads for turntables, as if the colors were music. Paul Chan borrows from Goya and Beckett. Swoon prints nearly life-size portraits on thin panels of cutout plastic applied directly to the wall. And Nicola López papers a corner with overlaid sheets depicting an urban hallucination of clouds, tires, chains, and oil derricks. Through Sept. 18. ♦ **"Against the Grain: Contemporary Art from the Edward R. Broida Collection."** Through July 10. ♦ **"Douglas Gordon: Timeline."** Through Sept. 4. (Open Wednesdays through Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Friday evenings until 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—**"No Limits, Just Edges: Jackson Pollock Paintings on Paper"** may force a shift in perceptions of the Action painter: on a smaller scale, his swagger registers as more delicate and intimate. The show ranges from Pollock's earliest sketches to late, experimental works. Through Sept. 29. ♦ **"Zaha Hadid."** A retrospective of work by the Pritzker Prize-winning visionary architect, who was born in Baghdad in 1950. Through Oct. 25. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART
Madison Ave. at 75th St. (800-944-8639)—**"Full House,"** the Whitney's seventy-fifth-anniversary extravaganza, is opening in stages, starting now, with a floor devoted to Edward Hopper; the rest of the show opens on June 29. ♦ Just one piece from the 2006 Biennial remains on view, but it's one of the show's best: Pierre Huyghe's video "A Journey That Wasn't" is in the lobby through June 18. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
Central Park W. at 79th St. (212-769-5100)—**"Darwin"** traces the discoveries and the influence of the great naturalist (1809-82), with, among other things, a re-creation of his study, samples of fossils he collected, and live specimens of tortoises, frogs, and iguanas like those which he encountered in the Galápagos Islands. Through Aug. 20. ♦ **"The Butterfly Conservatory."** Through June 23. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45.)

DRAWING CENTER
35 Wooster St. (212-219-2166)—**"Eva Hesse: Drawing."** Through July 15. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 6, and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

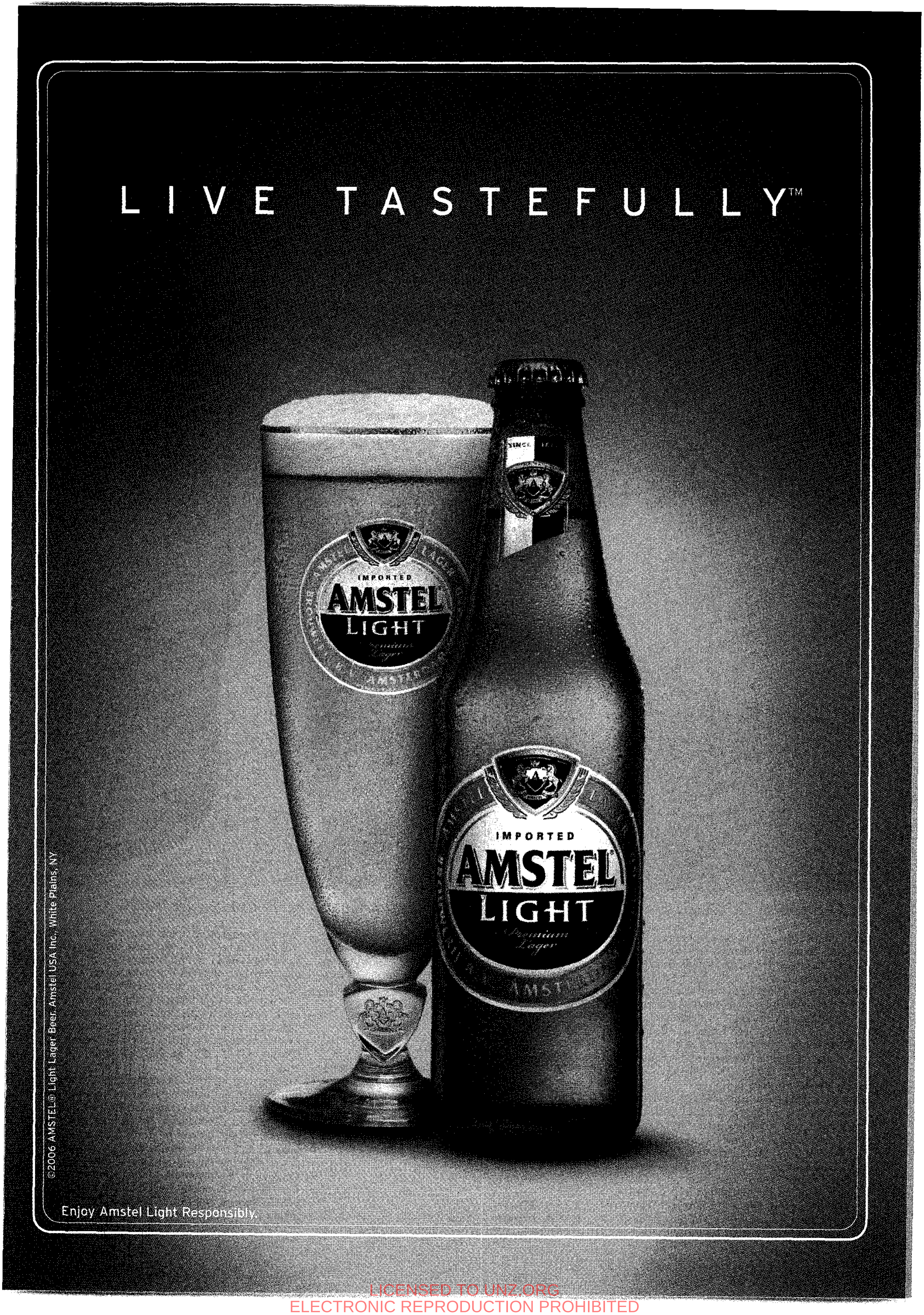
FRICK COLLECTION
1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700)—**"Jean-Étienne Liotard (1702-1789): Swiss Master."** Through Sept. 17. ♦ **"Veronese's Allegories: Virtue, Love, and Exploration in Renaissance Venice."** Through July 16. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6, and Sundays, 11 to 5.)

GROLIER CLUB
47 E. 60th St. (212-838-6690)—In past centuries, drawing was considered a creative counterpart to literacy. The material in **"Teaching America to Draw: Instructional Manuals and Ephemera, 1794-1925,"** described as "primers for a democratic art," includes self-guided how-to courses, demonstrative lithographs, and packets of flash cards proposing subjects to be copied. The show explores foreshortening, mastery of shadows, the use of grids as compositional aids, and—emerging around the eighteen-seventies—the possibilities of color, through publications specializing in figure drawing, landscape, still-life, and "an exquisite practice for drawing all manner of beasts in their true portraiture." Through July 29. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. (212-423-3200)—**"Eva Hesse: Sculpture."** Through Sept. 17. ♦ **"Max Liebermann: From Realism to Impressionism."** Through July 30. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 11 to 5:45, Thursdays, 11 to 9, and Fridays, 11 to 3. For the duration of the Hesse show, the museum will also be open on Saturdays, from 11 to 5:45, with no charge for admission.)

NATIONAL ACADEMY MUSEUM
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-369-4880)—The academy's hundred-and-eighty-first annual Invitational Exhibition of Contemporary Art is a smorgasbord of works by a hundred and twenty-four diverse artists, among them Tom Burkhardt, Alison Saar, Alexi Worth, Kiki Smith, Pat Steir, Lee Walton, Thomas Nozkowski, Alan Wiener, Steven Holl, Tony Feher, and Cordy Ryman. Through June 18. (Open Wednesdays and Thursdays, noon to 5, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6.)

NOGUCHI MUSEUM
9-01 33rd Rd., at Vernon Blvd., Long Island City (718-204-7088)—**"Best of Friends: R. Buckminster Fuller and Isamu Noguchi."** Here's a question for the engineer and impresario Bucky Fuller: Does the scant parcel of second-floor space devoted to this show reflect the value of the purportedly close relationship? Noguchi's studio turned museum, with its gorgeous sculpture garden and voluptuous display of mid-century biomorphs, is a more captivating draw. Nevertheless, this exhibition, illustrated by photographs, a time line, and a few sculptures, tracks how two parallel practices occasionally coincided, as with Noguchi's early chrome bust of Fuller or his late, Fulleresque "Tetrahelix" sculpture (1986). More often, it's a dialogue of ideas, best demonstrated by a wonderful telegram that Fuller sent to Noguchi, who was working on a mural with Diego Rivera in Mexico City, explaining in terse format Einstein's theory of relativity. Through Oct. 15. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5, and weekends, 11 to 6.)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GALLERIES–UPTOWN

Summer-hours warning: Many galleries are open Mondays through Fridays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6. Others follow the normal Tuesday-to-Saturday schedule. It's best to call ahead.

JAMES CASTLE / WALKER EVANS
Castle's small, scuffed drawings, made with soot and saliva between the nineteen-thirties and his death, in 1977, look like proto-Pop art, but their meticulous construction and repetitive content betray an outsider obsessiveness. This selection—which includes vitrines full of newsprint scraps, matchbook covers, crossword puzzles, and other humble material—is skewed toward drawings of headlines, labels, letters, and simple structures that find congenial echoes in the color Polaroids that Walker Evans made in the mid-nineteen-seventies of road signs, billboards, license plates, hand-lettered placards, and other examples of the American vernacular. Although Castle was deaf and did not speak, his art tapped into a universal language that Evans also found irresistible. Through Aug. 11. (Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. 212-794-0550.)

"Cloudy Hair Spray" (2003), by the Brooklyn-born photographer Louis Stettner, at Bonni Benrubi through July 29.

GUY PÈNE DU BOIS
Not much happens in Pène du Bois's paintings: people sit in cafés, try on shoes, attend parties. They're scenes that could have been painted by Edward Hopper's more social, less poetic cousin. Pène du Bois (1884-1958) was particularly fond of painting parties, though not as bacchanals; he focussed instead on the little moments when gossip is exchanged, or when couples lean against a wall and look toward their next conversation. This show, subtitled "Painter of Modern Life," includes works in all these flavors, then closes with an out-of-character image: a scene titled "Another Expulsion," in which a Picassoid guard casts Masaccio's softly realist Adam and Eve out of what looks like a museum. The resentful sentiment was beneath him, though: Pène du Bois's portrayals of double-chinned matrons and pink-cheeked bluebloods are as fierce as Daumier's, with an in-the-moment flash that saves them from the rapid aging of caricature. They're still fresh, still modern. Through June 30. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave. 212-535-5767.)

JOHN WESLEY
"My paintings are as flat as I can make them," proclaims Wesley, whose big, posterlike canvases made between the sixties and the eighties are surveyed here. Uninflected color—hot and flesh pinks, dingy blues and greens—fit together in geometrically complex blocks to make Pop pictures of beyond-banal Americana. Wesley's repeating forms are not symbolic or iconic. They're more like logos: sexy gams in high heels, bouncing babies, an abstracted Mickey and Minnie Mouse, or a quartet of cloned men with their backs to us, pissing in concert amid orange flames. Through June 23. (Zwirner & Wirth, 32 E. 69th St. 212-517-8677.)

Short List

ARTHUR DOVE: Alexandre, 41 E. 57th St. 212-755-2828. Through June 23. **ED MUSANTE:** Thiebaud, 42 E. 76th St. 212-737-9759. Through July 1. **MAN RAY:** Zabriskie, 41 E. 57th St. 212-752-1223. Through June 30. **LOUIS STETTNER:** Benrubi, 41 E. 57th St. 212-888-6007. Through July 29.

GALLERIES–CHELSEA

JEFF BURTON
Burton, who takes production stills on the sets of pornographic films in Los Angeles, also makes photographs that have a considerably more nuanced and tangential view of the subject at hand. Although there are occasional glimpses of hardcore action, the naked bodies in his pictures tend to be fragmented, reflected, or relegated to the edges of the frame. The resulting high-gloss color images are often as elegant as they are sly. Burton rarely misses a chance to comment on the greater Hollywood Babylon; included here are pictures of an apparently overwrought Kenneth Anger and his pill-strewn bathroom floor. Through June 24. (Kaplan, 525 W. 21st St. 212-645-7335.)

MARTIN EDER
Ah, the endless highbrow appeal of kitsch and cheap porn! Eder's paintings feature buxom naked ladies quoted from a motley mixture of vintage and contemporary sources. They recline in perspectively suspect poses, spread across big, luscious canvases that seem to have borrowed their backdrops from Salvador Dali. Here and there, a sad clown or a menacing bird observes. The most surreal aspect of the work, however, is that the grownup dollies on occasion share their uncomfortable spaces with favorite pinups of the grammar-school set: excruciatingly cute, fluffy kittens, rendered in Godzillian scale, loom threateningly over the nudes. Through July 1. (Boesky, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-680-9889.)

TILL GERHARD
Mike Kelley's term "black nostalgia"—a conflation of nostalgia and black humor—has been adopted as a leitmotif by this young German painter. Gerhard's renderings highlight the drifting, disaffected, drugged-out aspects of youth culture: "Turbojugend" gathering in a park under a trippy pink sky, wading like Baptists into the reflecting pool on the Mall in Washington at dawn, or surrounding a Burning Man-like effigy. Kelley's acuity in pinpointing the subtlest oddities of contemporary culture makes him a dangerous artist to invoke, but Gerhard does a competent, if slighter, job of mapping

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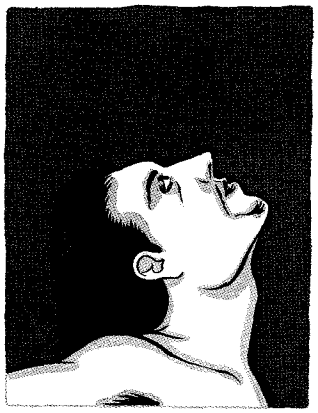


GRANT SHAFFER

American Ballet Theatre has had a long line of Latin hot dogs, but perhaps the most beloved was Julio Bocca, from Buenos Aires. Bocca started ballet training with his mother at the age of four; at fourteen he went professional. He was a superbly accomplished virtuoso, but his primary gift was his exuberance. Never was there a more complete stage animal. He says that he was a nervous performer ("Before my entrance, I go to the bathroom many times"), but you wouldn't have known it. Every double-pirouette-into-jackknifed-leap seemed a spontaneous personal report. "I like to work in this part," he once said, pointing to the heart, "more than this," indicating the feet. But the feet got worked, too, and, at thirty-nine, Bocca is tired. "I want to be able to stay up late and watch a movie," he told *Playbill*. On June 22nd, he will retire from American Ballet Theatre, after a performance of Kenneth MacMillan's "Manon," a big, glamorous, dirty ballet that he will perform with his longtime partner, Alessandra Ferri. This will be a screamer.

—*Joan Acocella*

new features on previously trod paths. Through June 24. (Holm, 524 W. 24th St. 212-627-7444.)

ANDREW GRASSIE
Art that goes behind the scenes at the museum (or, in this case, the gallery) naturally evokes Louise Lawler's postmodern photographs of masterworks installed in collectors' homes and museum galleries in various states of between-exhibition undress, and also the German photographer Thomas Struth's museo-excavations. Grassie goes a step farther, however, documenting the nooks and crannies of his New York gallery with photographs and then transcribing the information in egg tempera on paper mounted on board. The results are impressive in their jewel-like, photo-realistic accuracy. Where the cool, banal irony of Lawler et al. is perfect for photo-conceptualism, Grassie's painstakingly painted images turn depopulated art spaces into sacred spaces. Through June 30. (Sperone Westwater, 415 W. 13th St. 212-999-7337.)

LORETTA LUX
At once idealized and alien, beautiful and freakish, Lux's self-possessed boys and girls look as fragile as porcelain figurines, or like cunning little bombs: loaded, even lethal. The phenomenal success of Lux's first U.S. show, in 2004, hasn't pushed the artist's slow production process into overdrive or altered the modest scale of the work. There are only seventeen pictures in her new show, all computer-manipulated amalgams of photography and painting that she resolves into disturbingly uncanny portraits. On close examination, the children's prim, retro charm—so seductive to collectors—is frightening; given another two years and a few more tweaks to Lux's formula, these kids could take over the world. Through June 24. (Milo, 525 W. 25th St. 212-414-0370.)

THOMAS NOZKOWSKI
The painter's painter Nozkowski shows works on paper, in color and in black-and-white. The oil-on-paper color drawings are serious, tightly constructed formal abstractions without an emotional or conceptual care in the world—it's all about the loopy play of spirals, checkerboards, stripes, and plaids in strong, sunny colors like viridian, lilac, and bright red. The black-and-white suite meditates on single, repeated marks, albeit not in a programmatic or coded way; houndstooth checks, stripes, and crenellated lines in ink, gouache, and pencil bounce along like highly evolved doodles. Through June 17. (Bravin-Lee, 526 W. 26th St. 212-462-4404.)

HÉLIO OITICICA AND NEVILLE D'ALMEIDA
The "Cosmococas," made in the seventies by the Brazilian artist Oiticica and the filmmaker D'Almeida, are a famous series of slides showing drawings of newspaper photographs and album covers traced in lines of cocaine. These are projected in participatory environments called Quasi-Cinemas, accompanied by programmed sound and lighting, with hammocks or pillows for the audience to lounge on. On view now are a series of the original photographs, shot in 1973 and produced exactly thirty years later as C-prints mounted on aluminum. The dour dewlaps of a newsprint Luis Buñuel and the cover of Frank Zappa's "Weasels Ripped My Flesh" are outlined in coke, while, behind a curtain, the same pictures are shown in a Quasi-Cinema outfitted with mod mattresses on the floor. Through June 17. (Lelong, 528 W. 26th St. 212-315-0470.)

"REGENERATION: 50 PHOTOGRAPHERS OF TOMORROW"
Even if tomorrow doesn't bring fame to this group of young photographers, they all look pretty good today, which is more than you can say for most international surveys, no matter what the age of the artists. Nominated by their schools and selected by William Ewing, the director of Lausanne's Musée de l'Elysée, and his curatorial staff, the chosen fifty display little of the tentativeness or the bravado that many students show. Instead, they have technical proficiency, idiosyncratic flair, and a no-nonsense professionalism that just might give them staying power. Several (Idris Khan, Angela Strassheim, Lucy Levene) have already made their mark, but look out for Samantha Bass, Charlotte Player, Valérie Rouyer, Tarik Hayward, and Raffael Waldner. Through June 22. (Aperture, 547 W. 27th St. 212-505-5555.)

Short List

JEAN DUBUFFET/JEAN-MICHEL BASQUIAT: Pace-Wildenstein, 534 W. 25th St. 212-929-7000. Through June 17. **PAUL ETIENNE LINCOLN:** Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. 212-462-2668. Through June 23. **WANGECHI MUTU:** Sikkema Jenkins, 530 W. 22nd St. 212-929-2262. Through June 17. **RICHARD SERRA:** Gagosian, 555 W. 24th St. 212-741-1111. Through Aug. 11. **LAURIE SIMMONS:** Sperone Westwater, 415 W. 13th St. 212-999-7337. Through June 30. **"AN ONGOING LOW-GRADE MYSTERY":** Cooper, 521 W. 21st St. 212-255-1105. Through July 1.

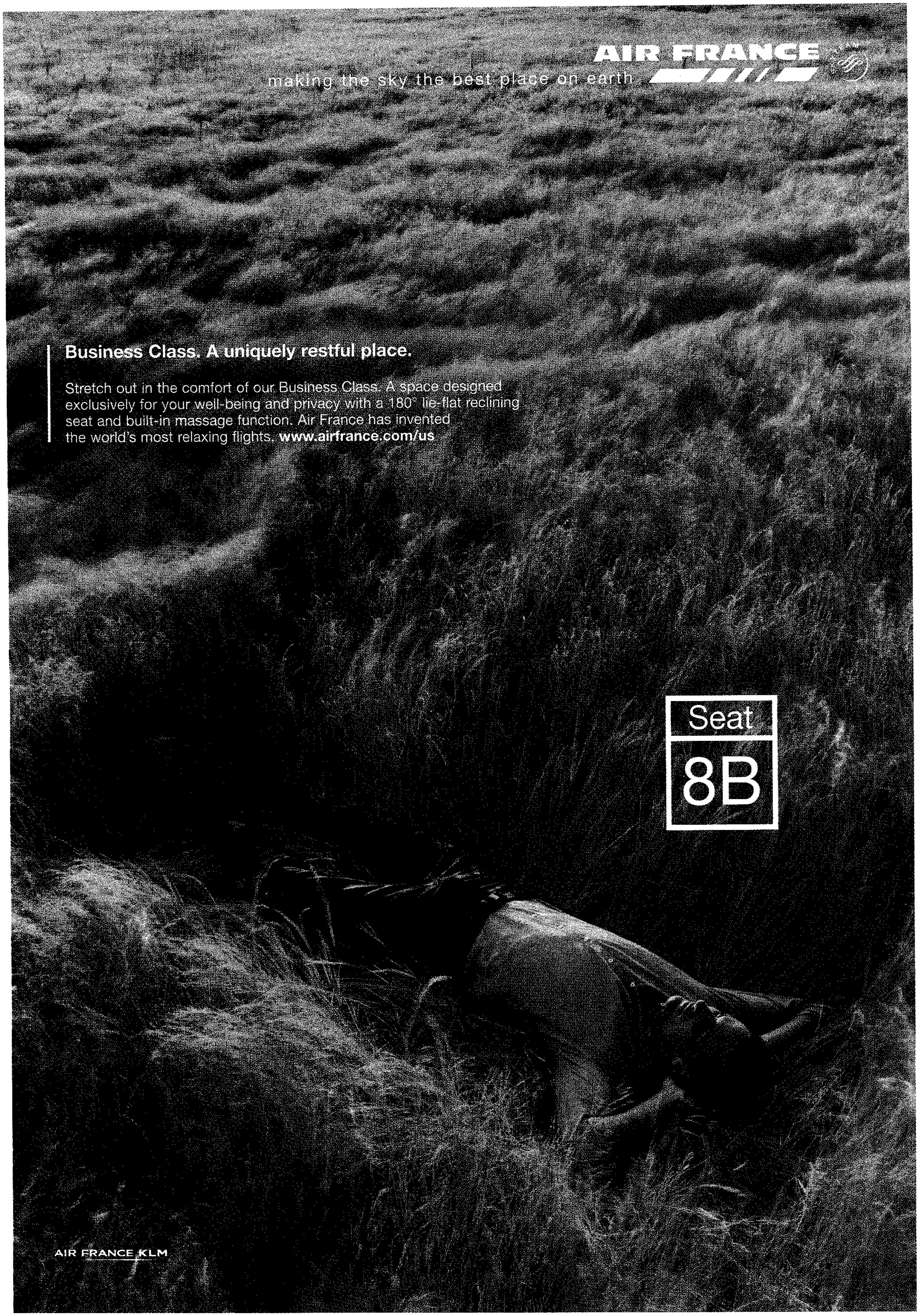
DANCE

NEW YORK CITY BALLET
This Friday, N.Y.C.B. premières "Slice to Sharp," a ballet by the Finnish choreographer Jorma Elo (the current resident choreographer at Boston Ballet). The ballet, Elo's first for the company, is made to movements from several string concertos by Vivaldi and von Biber, for eight dancers. Wednesday and Sunday, the company will perform Christopher Wheeldon's striking piece from last season, "Klavier," set to the third movement of Beethoven's "Hammerklavier" Sonata. Cast listings appear on the company's Web site a week in advance. ♦ June 14 at 7:30: "Divertimento No. 15," "Klavier," and "Fearful Symmetries." ♦ June 15 at 8 (an all-Balanchine program): "Divertimento No. 15," "Episodes," and "Vienna Waltzes." ♦ June 16 at 8: "Episodes," "Slice to Sharp" (première), and "Fearful Symmetries." ♦ June 17 at 2: "Slice to Sharp," "Friandises," and "Vienna Waltzes." ♦ June 17 at 8: "Divertimento No. 15," "In Memory of . . . ," and "Fancy Free." ♦ June 18 at 3: "Divertimento No. 15," "Klavier," and "Episodes." ♦ June 20 at 7:30: "Friandises," "Slice to Sharp," and "Vienna Waltzes." (New York State Theatre, Lincoln Center. 212-870-5570. Through June 25.)

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE
"Giselle" continues its run, with each of the company's top female dancers offering her rendition of the young peasant girl driven to madness and death by betrayal. On Wednesday and Saturday evening, the beguilingly dramatic Kirov star Diana Vishneva (who joined A.B.T. last spring) will dance the title role, and she will also be performing next week in Kenneth MacMillan's erotically charged drama "Manon" (1974), drawn from Abbé Prévost's novel about a girl who sacrifices love and self-respect for luxury. The ballet has been revived this season for the couple who first danced it at A.B.T., Alessandra Ferri and her longtime partner, the ardent Julio Bocca, who is retiring on June 22. Full casts are listed on the company's Web site. ♦ June 14 at 2: "Giselle" (with Irina Dvorovenko and Maxim Beloserkovsky). ♦ June 14 at 8: "Giselle" (with Vishneva and Vladimir Malakhov). ♦ June 15 at 8: "Giselle" (with Julie Kent and José Manuel Carreño). ♦ June 16 at 8: "Giselle" (with Xiomara Reyes and Bocca). ♦ June 17 at 2: "Giselle" (with Paloma Herrera and Marcelo Gomes). ♦ June 17 at 8: "Giselle" (with Vishneva and Ángel Corella). ♦ June 19 at 8: "Manon" (with Ferri and Bocca). ♦ June 20 at 8: "Manon" (with Kent and Carreño). (Metropolitan Opera House, Lincoln Center. 212-362-6000. Through July 15.)

FLAMENCO VIVO CARLOTA SANTANA
Premières of Rafaela Carrasco's "Burlador" and Antonio Hidalgo's "Imágenes Flamencas" conclude the troupe's run at the Joyce. (175 Eighth Ave. 212-242-0800. June 13-16 at 8, June 17 at 2 and 8, and June 18 at 2 and 7:30.)

H. T. CHEN & DANCERS
The Taiwan-raised, Chinatown-based Chen, in his new evening-length piece, "Shift," is obsessed with the dissonance felt by the modern traveller. Behind a dissolving white curtain lies a world of fantastical juxtapositions; jostling subway passengers give way to primitive desert wanderers. The quickness of these shifts is curiously natural, as the sleek dancers move between pavement and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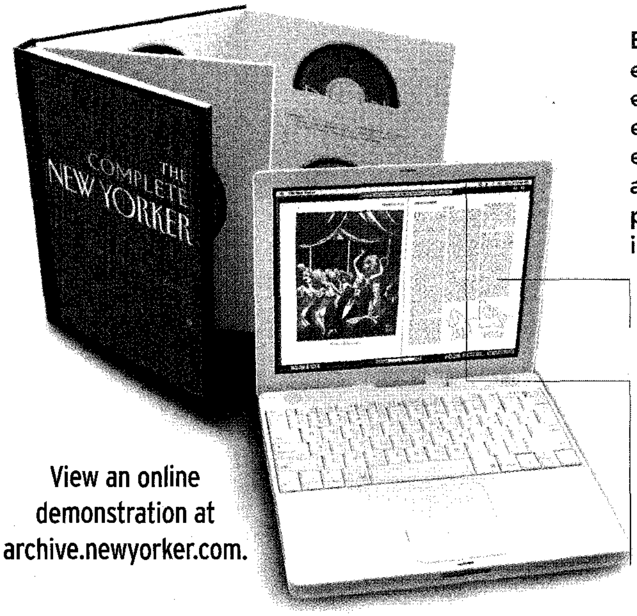

sand, New Age music and Taiwanese pop. With an original score by Fitz Patton. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. June 14-16 at 7:30 and June 17 at 2 and 7:30.)

NOCHE FLAMENCA
The flamenco troupe, led by Soledad Barrio and her husband, Martín Santangelo, returns with "Cielo de Tierra" ("Heaven of Earth"). (Theatre 80, at 80 St. Marks Pl. 212-352-3101. June 14-16 at 8, June 17 at 2 and 8, and June 18 at 2 and 5. Through July 30.)

"4-ISH"
Marco Gerris and his band of intrepid hipsters conclude their run at the New Victory. (209 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200. June 15-16 at 7, June 17 at 2 and 7, and June 18 at noon and 5.)

DIXIE FUN DANCE THEATRE
Campy, loud, and irrepressible, Dixie FunLee Shulman likes to blurt out awkward truths. In "The Money Show," the dancers wear T-shirts emblazoned with their day jobs ("dj," "model"), while a game-show host sells the audience lap dances and massages for cash—yes, actual cash. Shulman's good-time dances (a blend of disco fingers pointing skyward and early Michael Jackson moves) and her big money tree add a layer of over-the-top hilarity to the grim jokes, the discomfiting money dynamics, and a stone-cold-sober ending. (Dance New Amsterdam, 280 Broadway, at Chambers St. 212-279-4200. June 15-17 at 8 and June 18 at 2.)

DANCE COUNCIL MOVEMENT THEATRE
The young choreographer and former All-American gymnast Alyce Finwall offers two new dance-theatre works. Moving from what looks like a nightmare version of the audition scene in "A Chorus Line" to what looks like a bad eighties music video about schoolkids gone wild, the supposedly satirical "No Exit" is more bewildering than comic. "I Will Wait for You," with its heart-on-its-sleeve love story set to Michel Legrand and Metallica songs played on cellos, is comparatively straightforward. (Cunningham Studio, 55 Bethune St. 212-868-4444. June 15-16 at 9 and June 17 at 8.)

"FOOD FOR THOUGHT"
Danspace Project's annual curated series—a fundraiser for the AIDS Service Center—brings canned goods and the downtown dance community out of the woodwork. Friday's program, curated by Nami Yamamoto, asks choreographers to compress two ideas into three-minute capsules. Saturday's program is curated by the current It boy Christopher Williams, who requires his chosen artists to incorporate pre-1600 music into their pieces. Sunday's bill features work from four choreographers handpicked by Tere O'Connor: Michael Helland, Juliette Mapp, Jon Kinzel, and Jennifer Rosenblit. (St. Mark's In-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. 212-674-8194. June 16-18 at 8:30.)

"DANCING IN THE STREETS"
As part of the annual series of free outdoor performances, the charismatic tap dancer and world-music impresario Tamango drums up a *carnivale* in Washington Heights, with a global mixture of dancers and musicians from Haiti, Jamaica, Italy, and Cameroon. (Highbridge Park, 174th St. at Amsterdam Ave. 212-625-3505. June 17 at 3.)

"MULTIPLE UNDO & OTHER DISTORTIONS"
"Sitelines," the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council's free performance series, plants the consistently interesting downtown veteran Douglas Dunn and the up-and-coming Elke Rindfleisch in Elevated Acre, a park sandwiched between the East River and towering buildings. Dunn's response revels in the site's varied surfaces—wood, concrete, "lumpy garden"—and allows his dancers to choose when to do what. Rindfleisch plays off the park's abundant angles, matching them with torqued and twisted movement for a trio. (55 Water St. 212-219-9401. June 19-20 at 12:30. Through June 29.)

OUT OF TOWN

JACOB'S PILLOW
Dance starts up again in the Berkshires with a gala performance sampling some of this season's

highlights—dancers from Karole Armitage's troupe, the Limón Dance Company, and Compañía Nacional de Danza. Later in the summer, look for Suzanne Farrell Ballet, the flamenco queen Eva Yerbabuena, Pacific Northwest Ballet (in its first East Coast appearance under the directorship of Peter Boal), and Pillow regulars such as the Mark Morris Dance Group. (Becket, Mass. 413-243-0745. June 17 at 6:30.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

OPERA

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY OPERA: "ALICE IN WONDERLAND"
You would hardly expect an opera composer to emerge from the famously wonky music department at Princeton, but Peter Westergaard has been writing operas in a complex but flexible tonal idiom for half a century. His latest is a treatment of Lewis Carroll's tale, which the ensemble presents in a staged reading conducted by Richard Marshall. (Thalia Theatre, Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400. June 19 at 6:30 and 8:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

RIVERSIDE SYMPHONY
George Rothman's maverick ensemble, a longtime advocate for underrated composers of the past and the present, concludes its silver-anniversary season with a program including the Second Symphonies of Andrew Imbrie (the eminent Berkeley professor) and Niels Gade, along with Grieg's Piano Concerto, which features the pianist Terrence Wilson. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-721-6500. June 15 at 7:30.)

RECITALS

AUSTRIAN CULTURAL FORUM: "SOUL"
It would be perfectly natural for this outpost of Viennese culture to celebrate the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the birth of its most brilliant and controversial native son, Sigmund Freud—though not, perhaps, in music. The soprano Monika Riedler, the baritone Mathias Hausmann, and the pianist Markus Vorzellner, as part of the Forum's Sigmund Freud Project, will offer a recital of songs by Korngold, Mahler, Strauss, and Zemlinsky. (11 E. 52nd St. 212-319-5300. June 13 and June 15 at 8.)

BARGEMUSIC
Jeffrey Swann, an excellent pianist who lectures on the great Romantic composers, has the barge to himself for a run of all-Chopin concerts (which continues into next week). June 15 at 7:30: "Patriotism and Nostalgia," a program headed by the Andante Spianato and Grand Polonaise. ♦ June 16 at 7:30: "New Visions," featuring a selection of études from the Op. 10 and Op. 25 sets, the Berceuse, and the Scherzo No. 4. ♦ June 17 at 7:30: "In the Parisian Salon," a whirl of waltzes (including the Grande Valse Brillante, Op. 18), nocturnes, and impromptus (Nos. 1-3). ♦ June 18 at 4: "The Piano and Bel Canto," a program exploring Chopin's extraordinary lyricism, features the Preludes Nos. 1-8, the Ballade No. 1 in G Minor, and the Sonata No. 3 in B Minor. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-2083.)

DOWNTOWN ENSEMBLE
The adventurous group (which includes Joseph Kubera on piano and Terry Pender on electric guitar) offers world-première works by Daniel Goode, Barbara Monk Feldman, and the renowned experimentalist Peter Garland (his Symphony No. 1, "New Chants"). (Greenwich House, 46 Barrow St. June 15 at 8. Tickets at the door.)

MIRIAN CONTI
The pianist, who is not only an authority on Latin-American music but a friend to contemporary composers, offers a recital combining music by Scriabin and Chopin with world premières of works by David Winkler and Benjamin Lees, as

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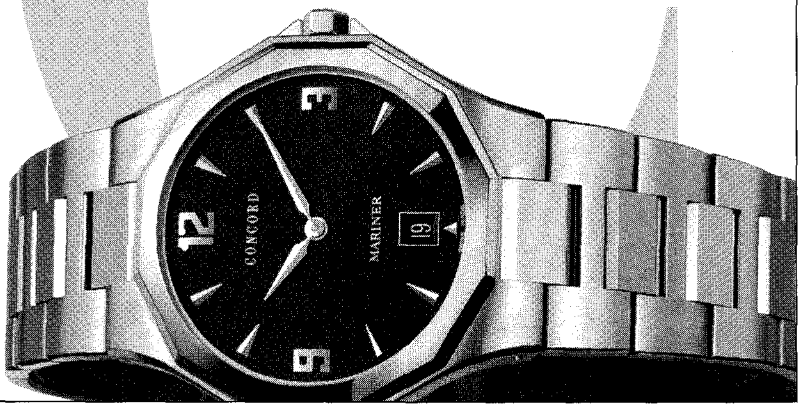

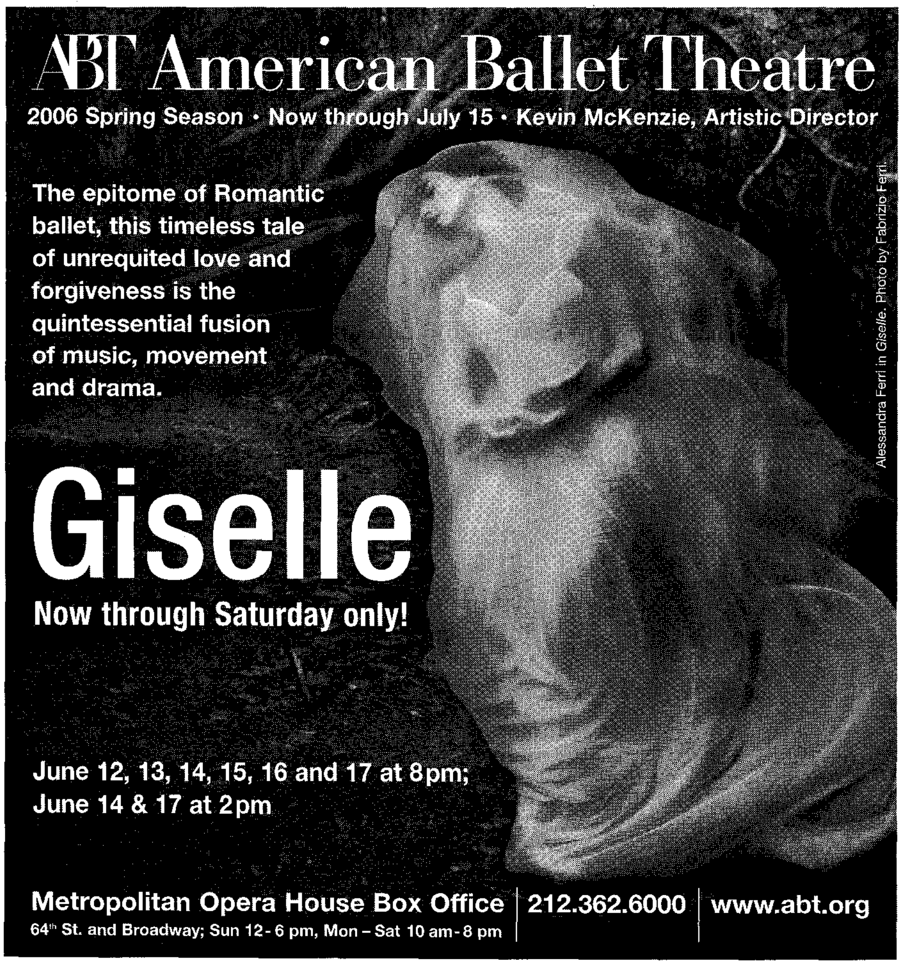
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Alessandra Ferri in *Giselle*. Photo by Fabrizio Ferri.

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well as pieces by Ernesto Halffter and Julian Aguirre. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 212-501-3330. June 15 at 8.)

LOCRIAN CHAMBER PLAYERS
This stalwart group, which programs works by international stars alongside those of local favorites, gives listeners a chance to catch up with the music of the past ten years—for free. The latest concert, performed by such musicians as the violinists Katie Lansdale and Calvin Wiersma, features the American premières of Wolfgang Rihm's "Fetzen" and "Fetzen 2," for string quartet, as well as works by John Adams ("Hallelujah Junction," for piano four-hands), Jonathan Faiman, and David Macdonald. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St., 10th fl. June 16 at 8. No tickets required.)

ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL ORGAN SERIES
This free recital series, a welcome addition to the summer calendar, lets you cool off inside one of the world's great cathedrals while listening to music of comparable stature. It begins with Andrew Henderson, the director of music at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, performing works by Bach, Buxtehude, and Herbert Howells. (Fifth Ave. at 51st St. June 18 at 4:30. No tickets required.)

HAKAN SENSOY
When MidAmerica Productions isn't bringing in community choirs for its jamboree concerts at Carnegie Hall, it concentrates on promoting the work of talented chamber musicians, often from the southeastern fringe of Europe. Its next featured artist is Sensoy, a young Turkish violinist, who will perform an unaccompanied recital that will include virtuoso works by Milhaud and Ysaÿe (the Sonata No. 2, "Obsession"), along with music by the Turkish composers Yalcin Tura and Mesud Cemil. (Weill Recital Hall, Carnegie Hall. 212-247-7800. June 19 at 8.)

JUILLIARD ARTISTS IN CONCERT
Bright young performers from the school offer free lunchtime recitals in this long-running series, which continues with a concert by the Seurat Quartet, who perform three of Mozart's Quartets for Flute and Strings. (180 Maiden Lane. June 20 at 12:30. No tickets required.)

JOHN KAMITSUKA
Kamitsuka, an intelligent artist with an elegant sound and a connoisseur following, has become a regular guest at Carnegie's Weill Recital Hall, where he'll next offer works by Bach (a specialty of his), Beethoven (the Six Bagatelles, Op. 126), Rachmaninoff, and Prokofiev (the formidable Sonata No. 7). (212-247-7800. June 20 at 8.)

OUT OF TOWN

TANNERY POND CONCERTS
Christian Steiner's tony little series, comfortably ensconced in an old Shaker tannery, presents a group of longtime colleagues—the pianist Gilbert Kalish, the violinist Carmit Zori, the clarinettist Alan Kay, and the cellist Timothy Eddy—who offer music by Milhaud (the rarely performed Clarinet Trio), Mendelssohn, and Messiaen (the "Quartet for the End of Time"). (Darrow School, New Lebanon, N.Y. 888-820-1696. June 17 at 8.)

HUDSON VALLEY CHAMBER MUSIC CIRCLE
The springtime series closes with style by hosting a concert by the Emerson String Quartet, performing quartets by Mendelssohn, Mozart (the "Dissonant"), and Shostakovich (the popular No. 8 in C Minor). (Olin Hall, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, N.Y. 518-537-6665. June 17 at 8.)

MUSIC MOUNTAIN
The festival's whitewashed box of a performance space, nestled in the northern-Connecticut countryside, has been the summer shrine of the string quartet for more than seventy-five years. The season's second concert is offered by the up-and-coming Amernet String Quartet, who appear with the distinguished violist Toby Appel on a program of works by Beethoven, Mozart (the Viola Quintet in C Major, K. 515), and Brahms (the Viola Quintet No. 2 in G Major). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. June 18 at 3.)

MOVIES OPENING

A/K/A TOMMY CHONG
A documentary by Josh Gilbert, about the comedian's arrest and imprisonment for selling bongs. Opening June 14. (Film Forum.)

THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS: TOKYO DRIFT
The third installment in the action series about street racing, starring Lucas Black and directed by Justin Lin. Opening June 16. (In wide release.)

GARFIELD: A TAIL OF TWO KITTIES
Breckin Meyer stars in this comedy, directed by Tim Hill, and Bill Murray provides the cat's voice. Opening June 16. (In wide release.)

THE LAKE HOUSE
Alejandro Agresti directed this drama, about a lonely woman (Sandra Bullock) who corresponds with the new inhabitant of her former house (Keanu Reeves). Opening June 16. (In wide release.)

LOVERBOY
Kevin Bacon directed this drama, about an overly possessive mother. Starring Bacon and Kyra Sedgwick. Opening June 16. (Angelika Film Center.)

LOWER CITY
Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. Opening June 16. (Sunshine Cinema.)

NACHO LIBRE
Jared Hess ("Napoleon Dynamite") directed this comedy, about a cook (Jack Black) who takes up Mexican freestyle wrestling to save an orphanage. Opening June 16. (In wide release.)

ONLY HUMAN
A comedy from Spain, about a Jewish woman who does not tell her family that her fiancé is Palestinian. Directed by Dominic Harari and Teresa Pelegri. In Spanish. Opening June 16. (Lincoln Square and Quad Cinema.)

THE OUTSIDER
A documentary by Nicholas Jarecki, about the director James Toback. Opening June 16. (Cinema Village.)

UNCUT
A man with a fractured pelvis, naked and confined to bed, attempts to seduce women. Directed by Gionata Zarantonello. In Italian. Opening June 16. (Cinema Village.)

WORDPLAY
Reviewed below in Now Playing. Opening June 16. (IFC Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

NOW PLAYING

LE AMICHE (THE GIRLFRIENDS)
Michelangelo Antonioni set up his fourth feature film, from 1955, like a glossy romantic melodrama of prosperous modernity. Clelia (Eleonora Rossi Drago) moves to Turin to open a new branch of the high-fashion boutique that she managed in Rome. When Rosetta, the flighty bourgeoise in the adjoining hotel room, attempts suicide, Clelia takes her under her wing, joins her circle of friends, and gets caught up in their frivolous, desperate games of love. What makes this conventional drama mysteriously original is the details: the architectural contours of the film's myriad locations seem to determine the action of the people who traverse them, and the film's assortment of portraits, reflections, sketches, and eye-catching clothing have more reality than the empty, miserable characters to whom they lend identities. With this quietly audacious attempt to convey the inner workings of ordinary life, Antonioni took the risk of making an ordinary film. In Italian.—*Richard Brody* (BAM; June 20.)

THE BIRDS
In 1962, between "Psycho" and "Marnie," his masterworks of raging id, Alfred Hitchcock, a city kid, filled the great outdoors with the embodiment of impersonal fury. Entranced by Tippi Hedren's cold, luminous allure, he cast Bodega Bay in the shadow of lust—the attacks by the titular villains coincide with the arrival of a wealthy playgirl (Hedren) in pursuit of a suave young lawyer from San Francisco

(Rod Taylor). Hitchcock's nature nightmare, which he filmed during the Cuban missile crisis, also reflected the political terrors of the age: the besieged locals call the assault an act of apocalyptic war, and shots of screaming schoolkids fleeing down a lonely road disturbingly presage iconic news images of Vietnamese children escaping from American napalm attacks.—*R.B.* (Bryant Park; June 19.)

THE BREAK-UP

This romantic comedy, directed by Peyton Reed, stars Vince Vaughn, looking a little paunchy, as a hyperarticulate Chicago tour guide with loutish habits, and Jennifer Aniston, looking great naked from the rear, as an art-gallery saleswoman who wants peace and order. They buy a condo together, and quarrels ensue—many quarrels, some of them nicely sustained. The snippy-snappy dialogue is good enough to make you regret that the movie wasn't better thought out as a piece of comic construction. The main trouble: what each one does professionally never feeds into the plot, so we are left, again and again, with nothing but the Relationship. Eventually, the two run out of arguments and the movie turns earnest and dull, but there are good bits nonetheless. With Jon Favreau, who renews his onscreen partnership with Vaughn, and Judy Davis, as Aniston's dragon-lady boss. Story by Vaughn, Jeremy Garelick, and Jay Lavender; screenplay by Garelick and Lavender.—*David Denby* (In wide release.)

CARS

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (In wide release.)

THE DA VINCI CODE

Ron Howard's film of Dan Brown's novel is faithful to both the spirit and the letter of the original. Such loyalty will be balm to the souls of his forty million readers, who have come to accept the book as holy writ. Others will greet the news as they would an outbreak of the plague. The movie stars Tom Hanks as Robert Langdon, an American professor who, partnered with a young French cryptographer (Audrey Tautou), untangles a knot of clues. These begin with a corpse in the Louvre, continue in a country house owned by a conspiracy expert (Ian McKellen), lead to London for a touch of local color, and end in a Scottish church, where the true descendant of Jesus is revealed, to regrettable sounds of mirth in the audience. Our heroes' opponents include a devilish bishop (Alfred Molina) and a murderous monk (Paul Bettany). It should have been possible to mold the nonsense of the novel into brightly colored hokum; instead, Howard, in collusion with his screenwriter, Akiva Goldsman, has chosen to serve up two and a half hours of verbose and joyless gloom. If you can't face watching this movie, you could always pray for it.—*Anthony Lane* (Reviewed in our issue of 5/29/06.) (In wide release.)

AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

For long stretches of this epochal documentary about global warming, Al Gore talks before an audience with the aid of slides and charts. There are side trips to fissured ice caps, disappearing glaciers—the snows of yesteryear—and stretches of newly parched and broken terrain. The science is detailed, deep-layered, vivid, and terrifying. But there are also passages in which Gore, off-camera, speaks in an intimate voice that we've never heard from him before; he talks about lying by the side of a river on a lazy summer day—the commonplace idyll of a lone person in tranquil ecstasy, utterly at home in nature. "An Inconvenient Truth" begins that way, and the entire movie, with its procession of nightmares and dangers, plays off that idyll; each time Gore returns to it, the mood has greater resonance. If even half of what Gore says is true, this may be the most galvanizing documentary you will see in your lifetime. Directed by Davis Guggenheim.—*D.D.* (6/12/06) (In wide release.)

MISSION: IMPOSSIBLE III

Tom Cruise returns as Ethan Hunt, the superfit secret operative who needs a team of fellow-agents to help him retrieve his missing sense of humor. They must also track down Agent Lindsey Farris (Keri Russell) in Berlin. She has been captured by Owen Davian (Philip Seymour Hoffman), who represents an even greater threat to world stability than Truman Capote. This third installment of the franchise, directed by J. J. Abrams, is the most streamlined to date, with a succession of gargantuan set pieces (the best of them in the Vatican) and dogged attempts to perforate the eardrums of the audience. Little of it makes sense, and the treachery of insiders—a source of worry to Hunt's superiors, played by Laurence Fishburne and Billy Crudup—has become the most wearisome feature of the genre. Toward the end, Abrams seems to run out of juice, and the role of Hunt's new wife (Michelle Monaghan) feels insultingly plaintive and thin. A tip for the next sequel: the closer these movies get to the old TV series, with its indefatigable teamwork, the more gripping they become. The mission was never meant to be a one-man show.—*A.L.* (5/15/06) (In wide release.)

THE OMEN

Despite its stiff artifice, the original 1976 version of this film became a classic by default. John Moore's remake follows it almost scene for scene but raises the visuals to current standards of flash and murk. Liev Schreiber is as apt a vessel of manly virtues as Gregory Peck, Julia Stiles matches Lee Remick as a blank slate of maternal sacrifice, and Seamus Davey-Fitzpatrick's Damien is a duly robotic cherub, but the action is now given even more of a religious slant: the film opens in the Vatican Observatory, where the telescope is put in service of a mortal prophecy that includes the Twin Towers, the new age of war, and Israel. The

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script has some truly macabre ideas, but they're realized almost entirely through the soundtrack, where bursts of gut-slamming, earsplitting noise compel a physical response even though there's little happening onscreen to warrant it. Long, slow, and suspenseless, this stillborn slog seems ready-made for instant reincarnation as "Scary Movie 5."—*R.B.* (In wide release.)

OVER THE HEDGE
The DreamWorks animation unit ups the creative ante with this comedy, about a group of hibernating forest creatures who awaken to find that civilization has settled into their own back yard. When the cute-as-a-button animals begin foraging for food in the garbage of the new housing development, the increasingly unhappy residents take exterminator action. Based on comic-strip characters created by Michael Fry and T. Lewis, and directed by Tim Johnson and Karey Kirkpatrick, the movie has a loony, slapstick verve, and the star-studded voice work is uniformly entertaining. Especially good are Wanda Sykes, as Stella the Skunk, Nick Nolte, as Vincent the Bear, and Thomas Haden Church, as the furry creatures' arch-nemesis, known as the Verminator.—*Bruce Diones* (In wide release.)

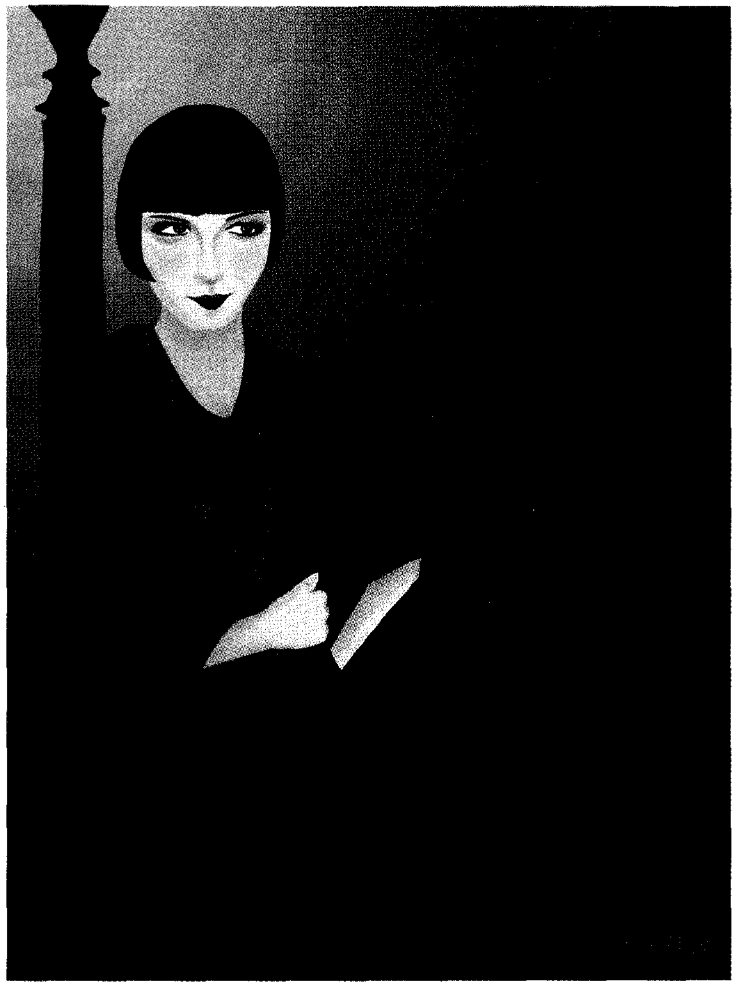
POSEIDON
In his remake of the campy "Poseidon Adventure," the director Wolfgang Petersen, back in the water again, gets down to business quickly: a giant cruise liner gets hit by a rogue wave and turns turtle. The ship's poker-table hustler (Josh Lucas), who mysteriously possesses the precise skills required to lead people through upside-down ocean liners, takes command of a few would-be survivors. What follows is an exciting exercise in fear and hydraulics. No doubt about it: Petersen has a dynamic feel for the rush and heave of water, the pent-up energy, the sheer heft and uncontrollable momentum of the stuff. Mashed, whomped in the face with exploding hatches, bloodied, burned, forcibly gargled again and again, the actors give a good impression of going through hell, and they look genuinely worse for the wear.—*D.D.* (5/22/06) (In wide release.)

A PRAIRIE HOME COMPANION
Robert Altman's re-creation of Garrison Keillor's incomparable weekly NPR show has many lovely moments and an over-all fluency, but it's mellow to the point of inertia—so determined not to work up a sweat that it doesn't work up any heat, either. What we see is not quite the show—that is, it's billed not as the actual "Home Companion" but as a local Midwestern show of no great fame. Some wealthy religious Texans have bought both the local station and the show's home—the Fitzgerald Theatre, in St. Paul, Minnesota—and are closing them down. The movie is devoted to a backstage view of the last broadcast (which, confusingly, is not a haphazard amateur production but something like a typically brilliant "Home Companion" with some movie stars added). Large but soft-shoed, bearish but courtly, Keillor pads around, controlling a flow of comedy and music performed by a cast that includes Meryl Streep, who looks great and sings well, and Woody Harrelson and John C. Reilly, as Dusty and Lefty, singing cowboys with mean, dirty lyrics. Emotionally, the movie is a queasy experience: "Prairie" is widely loved, so it's hard to understand why Keillor promotes this self-pitying story of extinction by religious philistines. With Linda Williams and other "Prairie" regulars.—*D.D.* (6/12/06) (In wide release.)

UNITED 93
Paul Greengrass's account of how a single group of passengers, almost certain of death, decided on the morning of September 11, 2001, to fight back against hijackers on a suicide mission turns out to be—after much public anxiety about potential "exploitation"—an example of one hundred per cent professional filmmaking. Greengrass's movie is tightly wrapped, unrelenting, and, no matter how exciting, superbly precise. For this story of semi-anonymous group heroism, he uses actual professionals (pilots, flight attendants, an air-traffic controller) mixed in with largely unknown actors, and avoids visual or verbal rhetoric. The handheld camera is an active participant in everything that's going on—and still manages to see what it needs to see out of the corner of its eye. The avoidance of front-and-center staging makes us feel the uncertainty of an unprecedented situation. This is true existential filmmaking; in the end, the viewer's dread is released in mad exhilaration as the passengers charge the hijackers with the force of engorged water breaking through a dam.—*D.D.* (5/1/06) (In wide release.)

WORDPLAY
The cult of crossword puzzles is the subject of this genial documentary by Patrick Creadon, which centers on Will Shortz, the editor of the *Times* crossword and the puzzle guru on NPR. Creadon interviews such crossword-puzzle addicts as Bill Clinton, Ken Burns, and Jon Stewart, all of whom clearly revel in the daily challenge of word trickery, and shows the puzzle creator Merl Reagle as he constructs a brainteaser from scratch. A year's worth of puzzle-solving, for a skilled hundred people, culminates at the annual American Crossword Puzzle Tournament, in Stamford, Connecticut, presided over by the benevolent Shortz himself, where a group of superbrains battle it out. Competition is tense, and the film captures the sense of excitement and community felt by a group of people who usually play alone.—*Shauna Lyon* (IFC Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

X-MEN: THE LAST STAND
Brett Ratner, taking over as director of the airborne "X-Men" franchise from Bryan Singer, ignores the liquid beauty and poetic fantasy of Singer's work and trashes his actors by repeatedly slamming them around or leaving them stranded. It's a gruelling, repetitive piece of work, much of it execrably staged. Where is it written that computer-generated imagery has to be used to extend the violence of comic-book plots? Bring on the aesthetes. With Ian McKellen, used more centrally than before, and in good voice; Patrick Stewart; Hugh Jackman; Famke Janssen; and the body, Rebecca Romijn, who is regrettably killed off before we can get more than a look at her.—*D.D.* (6/5/06) (In wide release.)



"Pandora's Box," starring Louise Brooks, in revival at Film Forum.

DIVYA SRINIVASAN

Also Playing

AKEELAH AND THE BEE: In wide release. **AN AMERICAN HAUNTING:** In wide release. **COASTLINES:** IFC Center. **DISTRICT B13:** In wide release. **THE WILD:** In wide release.

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES
32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5181)—"NewFilmmakers." June 14 at 8: "Meaty McMeat" (2003, Nathan Smithe). ♦ A Warren Sonbert retrospective. June 14 at 8 and June 17 at 6: Program 1 (1966-67). ♦ June 15 at 8 and June 17 at 8:30: Program 2 (1968-72). ♦ June 16 at 7 and June 18 at 6: Program 3 (1976-83). ♦ June 16 at 9:30 and June 18 at 8:30: Program 4 (1986-92). ♦ Special screening. June 15 at 7:30: "The Animal" (1976, Walter Ungerer). ♦ Through July 1: "New York Asian Film Festival." Selected screenings. For more information, go to www.subwaycinema.com. June 16 at 8:30: "A Bittersweet Life" (2005, Kim Jee-woon; in Korean). ♦ June 17 at 2: "Ab Tak Chhappan" (2004, Shimit Amin; in Hindi). ♦ June 17 at 7:30: "The Great Yokai War" (2005, Takashi Miike; in Japanese). ♦ June 18 at 3: "Ek Hasina Thi" (2004, Sriram Raghavan; in Hindi). ♦ June 18 at 6:10: "Cromartie High School" (2005, Yudai Yamaguchi; in Japanese). ♦ June 20 at 8:30: "Funky Forest: The First Contact" (2005, Katsuhito Ishii; in Japanese).

BAM ROSE CINEMAS
30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100)—Special screening. June 14 at 7:30: "Mandingo" (1975, Richard Fleischer), followed by a discussion with the critic Elliott Stein. ♦ Through June 29: The films of Michelangelo Antonioni. All films are in Italian. June 15 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "Chronicle of a Love" (1950). ♦ June 16 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "Il Grido" (1957). ♦ June 17 at 3, 6, and 9: "L'Avventura" (1960). ♦ June 18 at 2, 4:30, 7, and 9:30: "La Notte" (1961). ♦ June 19 at 7: "Chung Kuo Cina" (1972). ♦ June 20 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "Le Amiche" (†).

BRYANT PARK
Sixth Ave. between 40th and 42nd Sts. (212-768-4242)—Through Aug. 21: HBO Bryant Park Film Festival. June 19 (lawn opens at 5; screening begins at dusk): "The Birds" (†).

FILM FORUM

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—In revival. June 14-20 at 1, 3:45, 6:45, and 9:30: "Army of Shadows" (1969, Jean-Pierre Melville; in French). ♦ "B Noir." June 14 at 1, 4:40, and 8:20: "House of Bamboo" (1955, Samuel Fuller). ♦ June 14 at 3, 6:40, and 10:20: "The Crimson Kimono" (1959, Fuller). ♦ June 15 at 1:30, 5:30, and 9:30: "Border Incident" (1949, Anthony Mann). ♦ June 15 at 3:30 and 7:30: "Slightly Scarlet" (1956, Allan Dwan). ♦ In revival. June 16-20 at 1, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, and 10: "Pandora's Box" (1929, G. W. Pabst; silent).

FRENCH INSTITUTE ALLIANCE FRANÇAISE

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—The films of Michel Brault. June 20 at 12:30, 4, and 7: "For the Ones to Come" (1963; in French) and "The Snowshoers" (1958; in French), followed by a discussion with Brault and Albert Maysles.

IFC CENTER

323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (212-924-7771)—"Waverly Midnights." June 16-17: "Uptown Saturday Night" (1974, Sidney Poitier).

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480)—"To Save and Project." June 14 at 6: "Mademoiselle de la Seiglière" (1919-21, André Antoine; silent). ♦ June 14 at 8: "House of Strangers" (1949, Joseph Mankiewicz). ♦ June 14 at 8: "Le Coupable" (1917, Antoine; silent). ♦ June 15 at 5:30: "Rat Trap" (1981, Adoor Gopalakrishnan; in Malayalam). ♦ June 15 at 6: "L'Arlésienne" (1922, Antoine; silent). ♦ June 15 at 8: "Harvest: 3000 Years" (1976, Haile Gerima; in Amharic). ♦ June 15 at 8: "La Terre" (1919-21, Antoine; silent). ♦ June 16 at 6 and June 19 at 6: "By the Law" (1926, Lev Kuleshov; silent). ♦ June 16 at 6:30: "Il Canale degli Angeli" (1934, Francesco Passinetti; in Italian). ♦ June 16 at 8 and June 17 at 4:45: "The Mad Fox" (1962, Uchida Tomu; in Japanese). ♦ June 17 at 1: "The Emigrants" (1971, Jan Troell; in Swedish). ♦ June 17 at 7:45: "Ganja and Hess" (1973, Bill Gunn). ♦ June 19 at 8: "The Queen of Spades" (1949, Thorold Dickinson). ♦ Special screenings. June 14 at 6 and June 16 at 8: Recent international short films (2004-05). ♦ Films from CalArts. June 17 at 2: Short films about history (1997-2004). ♦ June 17 at 4 and June 18 at 5: Short films of the absurd (1980-2004). ♦ June 18 at 1 and June 19 at 6: "The 1980s," Program 1. ♦ June 18 at 3 and June 19 at 7:30: "The 1980s," Program 2. ♦ The films of James Mangold. June 18 at 2: "Girl, Interrupted" (1999). ♦ June 18 at 4:30: "Kate and Leopold" (2001).

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—In première, at the ImaginAsian Theatre, 239 E. 59th St. June 16 at 7:30: "Strangers with Candy" (2006, Paul Dinello), introduced by the director and Amy Sedaris. For ticket information, call 718-784-4520. ♦ Special screening. June 16 at 8: "A Dog's Dream" (2005, Angelos Frantzis; in Greek). ♦ Through July 9: The Films of Stanley Kubrick. June 17 at 2 and June 18 at 4: "Paths of Glory" (1957). ♦ June 17 at 4: "Full Metal Jacket" (1987), introduced by Matthew Modine. ♦ June 17 at 7:30: "Spartacus" (1960). ♦ June 18 at 6:30: "A.I." (2001, Steven Spielberg). ♦ "Fist and Sword." June 18 at 2: "Death Trance" (2005, Yuji Shimomura; in Japanese).

PIONEER THEATRE

155 E. 3rd St. (212-591-0434)—Special screenings. June 14 at 7 and 9, June 16-17 at 11, and June 18-19 at 5: "Psychopathia Sexualis" (2006, Bret Wood). ♦ June 15 at 7: "After the Apocalypse" (2004, Yasuaki Nakajima). ♦ June 15 and June 18-20 at 9 and June 16-17 at 7 and 9: "Going Under" (2004, Eric Werthman). ♦ June 15 at 11: "Gram Parsons: Fallen Angel" (2005, Gandulf Hennig). ♦ June 17 at 4:30 and June 18 at 2:45: "Father Dad" (2006, Kenya Cagle). ♦ June 19 at 7: "Little Shop of Horrors" (1960, Roger Corman; colorized). ♦ June 20 at 7: "The Healing Gardens of New York" (2006, Alexandra Isles).

RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART

150 W. 17th St. (212-620-5000)—Special screening. June 14 at 7: "Taiji, Chaotic Harmony" (2006, Sat Chuen Hon).

SUNSHINE CINEMA

143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182)—"Sunshine@Midnight." June 16-17: "The Apple" (1980, Menahem Golan).

THALIA THEATRE

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—In revival. June 18 at 3 and June 20 at 4:30: "Princess Tam Tam" (1935, Edmond T. Gréville). ♦ June 18 at 5 and June 20 at 6:30: "Transamerica" (2005, Duncan Tucker).

WALTER READE THEATRE

Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through June 22: Human Rights Watch International Film Festival. Selected screenings. June 14 at 6:30 and June 15 at 3:30: "Shadya" (2005, Roy Westler; in Hebrew and Arabic) and "They Call Me Muslim" (2005, Diana Ferrero; in French, English, and Farsi). ♦ June 14 at 9 and June 15 at 1: "Source" (2005, Martin Marecek and Martin Skalsky; in Russian, English, and Azerbaijani). ♦ June 15 at 6, June 16 at 1, June 17 at 3:30, and June 19 at 3:30: "Rain in a Dry Land" (2006, Anne Makepeace; in English, Mai Mai, and Somali). ♦ June 15 at 8:30 and June 16 at 3:30: "Shooting Dogs" (2005, Michael Caton-Jones; in English and Kinyarwandan). ♦ June 17 at 6: "My American Dream: How Democracy Works Now" (2006, Shari Robertson and Michael Camerini). ♦ June 17-18 at 9 and June 20 at 1: "Switch Off" (2005, Manel Mayol; in Spanish and Mapudungun). ♦ June 18 at 1 and June 20 at 8:45: "Winter in Baghdad" (2005, Javier Corcuera; in

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Arabic). ♦ June 18 at 4 and June 20 at 6:15: "KZ" (2005, Rex Bloomstein; in English and German). ♦ June 18 at 6:30 and June 19 at 8:45: "Men on the Edge: Fisherman's Diary" (2005, Avner Faingulernt and Macabit Abramzon; in Arabic and Hebrew). ♦ June 19 at 6:15: "Smiling in a War Zone" (2005, Simone Aaberg Kærn and Magnus Bejmar; in Danish and English).

READINGS AND TALKS

"PARK-LIT"
The roving alfresco reading series in New York City public parks moves to Madison Square Park, as *Granta* presents its contributors Nell Freudenberger, Alison Smith, and Saïd Sayrafiezadeh. (Fifth Ave. at 24th St. June 15 at 6:30. For more information, call 212-696-6609.)

"POETS AND PEACEMAKERS"
Wendie Malick, Dan Lauria, Betsy Von Furstenberg, Bess Rous, Brían F. O'Byrne, and other actors read from the works of Nobel Prize-winning authors, including Boris Pasternak, Wislawa Szymborska, and Derek Walcott, and from the acceptance speeches of Elie Wiesel, Desmond Tutu, Jimmy Carter, and other winners of the Nobel Peace Prize. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. No tickets necessary. June 16 at 12:30.)

TOM SANCTON
Sancton reads from his memoir, "Song for My Fathers," an account of growing up middle class in New Orleans during the fifties and sixties and being taught to play the clarinet by French Quarter musicians. (The Half King, 505 W. 23rd St. No tickets necessary. June 19 at 7.)

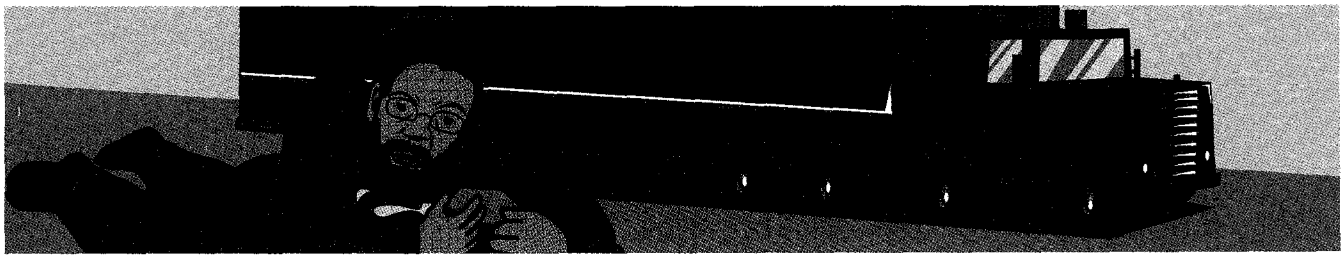
ROSANNE CASH
The singer-songwriter talks with Anthony DeCurtis, of *Rolling Stone*. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 212-415-5500. June 19 at 8:15.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"BLOOMSDAY ON BROADWAY"
Leopold Bloom, the hero of James Joyce's "Ulysses," wandered the streets of Dublin a hundred and two years ago this June 16, and for the past quarter century Symphony Space has celebrated the fictitious walk with a marathon reading from the book. This year, in honor of the centennial of Joyce's friend Samuel Beckett, the event also includes selections from Beckett's novel "Molloy," as well as from his plays and poetry. Marian Seldes, Denis O'Hare, Frank McCourt, Robin Howard, and some eighty others will perform. (Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400. June 16, starting at noon.)

SUMMER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION
The American Museum of Natural History marks the changing of the seasons with science activities, including a chance to look at the sun through telescopes with special filters, and a festival of music and dance from Peru. (Central Park W. at 79th St. 212-769-5100. June 18, from 11 to 5.)

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES
Sleek and curvaceous, Marc Newson's "Lockheed Lounge" looks like a chaise longue meant for the boudoir of a very groovy space station. A prototype of his futuristic chair headlines **Sotheby's** all-day auction of twentieth-century design (June 14), which includes an afternoon sale of glass pieces (mainly vases, with a large selection of Tiffany) from a private collection. The four Revolutionary War battle flags on offer in a separate sale on the same day are among only thirty or so in existence, and the only ones not already in public or institutional collections; the American flags were won in two battles, by the British commander Lieutenant Colonel Banastre Tarleton, and are being repatriated, after two hundred and twenty-five years, by a descendant, Captain Christopher Tarleton Fagan. A sale of books and manuscripts follows on June 15. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.) ♦ **Christie's** offers its own selection of books and manuscripts (June 14), featuring a letter written by Thomas Jefferson in which the new President rejoices in "the happy consequences of our revolution." Two days later (June 16), the house holds a sale of antiquities, in which three second-century Roman marble sculptures—of Venus, Cupid, and Hermaphroditus—from two prominent eighteenth- and nineteenth-century collections take pride of place. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.) ♦ An auction at **Swann** of maps, atlases, and historical and natural-history prints (June 15) offers several maps of North America, including "Tabula Terre Nove," a woodcut made in 1513 in Strasbourg, the first map of America to appear in an atlas. (104 E. 25th St. 212-254-4710.) ♦ If Roman second-century statues are beyond your reach, perhaps a visit to the **Affordable Art Fair** (June 16-18) is in order. Seventy international dealers will be offering contemporary art at the Metropolitan Pavilion, in the Flatiron district, and everything is under five thousand dollars. (125 W. 18th St. 212-255-2003.)



MAXIMILIAN BODE

William Pope.L's mobile performance piece, "The Black Factory."

ON THE HORIZON

DANCE
MISHA RETURNS
June 29–July 1

Bard SummerScape opens with two premières by the choreographer Donna Uchizono, one of which features Mikhail Baryshnikov, along with Hristoula Harakas and Jodi Melnick, at the Fisher Center, in Annandale-on-Hudson. (845-758-7900.)

MOVIES
SOMETHING WILDER
June 30–July 20

Although Film Forum's three-week-long "Essential Wilder" series is missing what may be Billy Wilder's best film—the breathlessly romantic "Love in the Afternoon"—it has pretty much everything else, from the acrid realism of "The Lost Weekend" to the comic heartbreak of "The Apartment," as well as films that he wrote for other directors, including Ernst Lubitsch's "Ninotchka." (212-727-8110.)

ART
OFF A TRUCK
July 22

The performance artist William Pope.L is bringing his mobile art project, "The Black Factory," to the Union Square Greenmarket. People are asked to bring objects that represent ideas of blackness to Pope.L's truck/laboratory, where they will be used as the basis for improvised performance works. (212-229-5353.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC
STAR QUALITY
July 22

Christian Steiner, an expert photographer and a friend of many opera legends, has lured the admired dramatic soprano Christine Brewer to test the limits of his little hall at Tannery Pond with songs by Wagner, Barber, and Strauss. (New Lebanon, N.Y. 888-820-1696.)

NIGHT LIFE
EVERYBODY IN!
July 29

McCarren Pool, a Works Progress Administration palace in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, hasn't seen any bathers since the Koch administration. This summer, however, it will once again be a gathering place for young people, although fewer in swimwear, as it becomes a temporary amphitheatre. The music starts next month, with the British band Bloc Party. (212-307-7171.)

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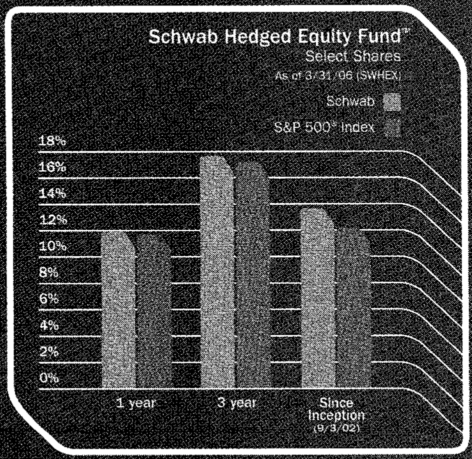

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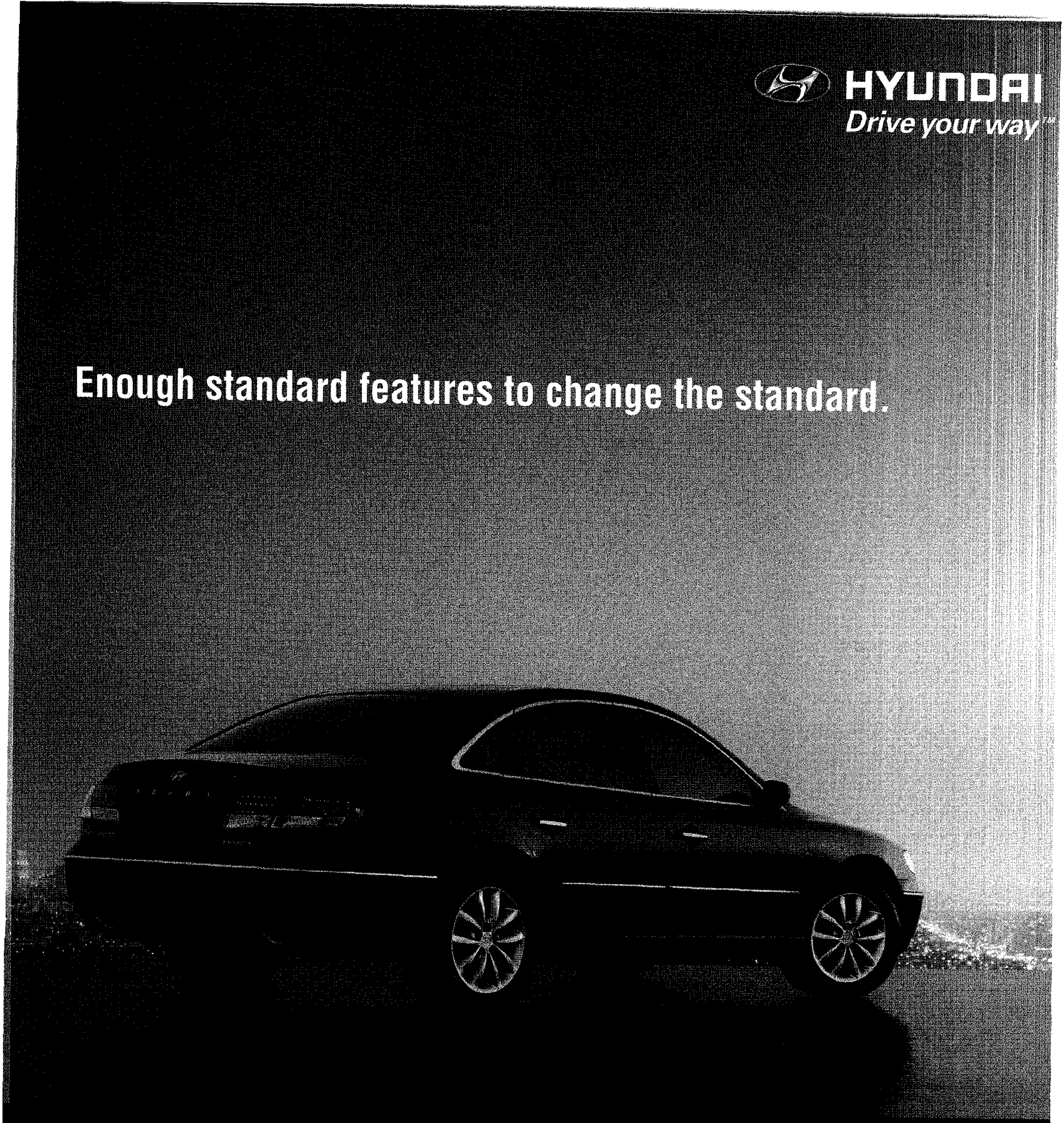

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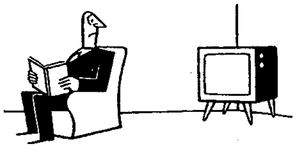
THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT
DISTRACTION



For five days last week, the White House and its Capitol Hill allies did urgent battle against what they perceive, or say they perceive, as an attack on the institution of marriage. It's a strange sort of attack, to be sure: a wonderfully pacific attack, a supportive attack, an attack without the slightest intention or capacity to cause harm, consisting, as it does, of the earnest wish of certain loving couples to join themselves to that very institution and thus to feel themselves, and be accepted as, full members of the American (and human) family. The counterattack—beginning on Saturday with a radio address by President Bush, continuing on Monday with a nearly identical Presidential speech, this one to "religious leaders" and such, and climaxing on Wednesday with a Senate vote on a proposed constitutional amendment—was widely viewed, even by many of its nominal supporters, as a performance piece, a political pageant aimed at energizing the Christianist wing of the Republican "base" for the midterm elections while distracting public attention from the Iraq war, whose most recent numbing horror, the revelation of an apparent My Lai-like massacre of twenty-four civilians by American marines in the town of Haditha, had been dominating the news.

By the end of the week, quite unexpectedly, the second of these aims, at least, had been rendered politically (if not morally) moot. On Thursday came two pieces of genuinely good news from Iraq. After seven months of post-election paralysis, the country's most sensitive Cabinet posts—the ministries of the interior, defense, and national security—were finally filled. And, equally important for the safety of Iraq's citizens and more so for the morale of American troops, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian thug who had been the most brutal and nihilistic terrorist in the land, was killed by an American air strike on his hiding place north of Baghdad.

Bush, in his remarks on both subjects, gay marriage and Zarqawi, struck a restrained, almost subdued tone. On Saturday he said, "As this debate goes forward, we must remember that every American deserves to be treated with tolerance, respect, and dignity. All of us have a duty to conduct this discussion with civility and decency toward one another." On Monday he said, "America is a free society which limits the role of government in the lives of our citizens. In this country, people are free to choose how they live their lives." (Never mind that he was proposing to use the very taproot of American government, the Constitution, precisely to prevent people from choosing how to live their lives.) And on Thursday he said, "Zarqawi is dead, but the difficult and necessary mission in Iraq continues. We can expect the terrorists and insurgents to carry on without him. We can expect the sectarian violence to continue."

Bush's sobriety on Iraq was simply what the realities of the situation called for. In this war, as even he now realizes, too many missions accomplished, too many turning points, too many decisive moments have ended in blood and mire for triumphalism to be warranted or believable. His tonal restraint on marriage was not so straightforwardly motivated. He wishes to placate certain overlapping constituencies (social conservatives, the religious right, anti-gay bigots) while not unnecessarily alienating others (libertarian conservatives, tolerant suburbanites, friends and families of gays and lesbians). And there is a possible additional explanation: perhaps his heart (the

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

organ he most respects) just isn't in it. Perhaps he is sincere in his insincerity.

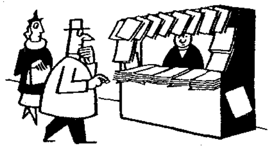
The President may well believe, in a desultory way, that marriage—as distinct, apparently, from civil unions, which he is on record as approving—ought to be, as he said in both speeches, "the union of a man and a woman." But a Constitutional amendment? There's ample reason to doubt that Bush really means what he says about it. His Vice-President and mentor, Dick Cheney, a member of that families-of-gays-and-lesbians demographic, is against it. (Last month, ABC's Diane Sawyer asked Cheney's daughter Mary if she hopes to marry her partner of fourteen years, Heather Poe. "From my perspective, Heather and I already are married," Cheney replied. "The way I look at it is, we're just waiting for state and federal law to catch up with us.") Laura Bush, politely but unmistakably, has made her displeasure clear. "I don't think it should be used as a campaign tool, obviously," the First Lady recently told Fox News. As for Bush himself, the current issue of *Newsweek* quotes "one of his old friends" as putting it this way: "I don't think he gives a shit about it."

"For more than forty years, the homosexual activist movement has sought to implement a master plan that has had as its centerpiece the utter destruction of the family," James Dobson, the head of Focus on the Family and a prominent guest at Bush's Monday speech, has said. "Barring a miracle, the family as it has been known for more than five millennia will crumble, presaging the fall of Western civilization itself." Bush didn't go that far. He didn't even say that gay marriage, per se, would be a bad thing. He merely said that "changing the definition of marriage would undermine the family structure," though he didn't say why or how. Perhaps it doesn't matter. The Constitution is not going to be defaced by the "Marriage Protection Amendment," as its supporters style it. In Wednesday's Senate vote, it failed to attract even a majority, let alone the sixty-seven votes that would be required for actual approval. But the President's hypocrisy is not cost-free. He has stirred up prejudice. He has lent his imprimatur to an effort to make gays and lesbians—specifically, gays and lesbians who would like to formalize and solemnize their commitment to their partners and, in some cases, to their adopted or natural children—the scapegoats for the real troubles that afflict American families.

In the past forty years, the definition of marriage has indeed been changed, not by any homosexual master plan but by an epidemic of heterosexual divorce. Marriage is a social good—Bush is certainly right about that—but it has become a disposable good. The causes of divorce are manifold, and they do not include gay marriage. (The state with the nation's lowest divorce rate, Massachusetts, is also the only state where gay marriage is legal.) The day after the Senate vote, *USA Today* reported that "the number of active-duty soldiers getting divorced has been rising sharply with deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq." The divorce rate among Army enlisted personnel since 2003, the year of the invasion of Iraq, is up twenty-eight per cent. For officers the increase is seventy-eight per cent. Perhaps this, rather than the imaginary threat of same-sex marriage, is something that the President should look into.

—*Hendrik Hertzberg*

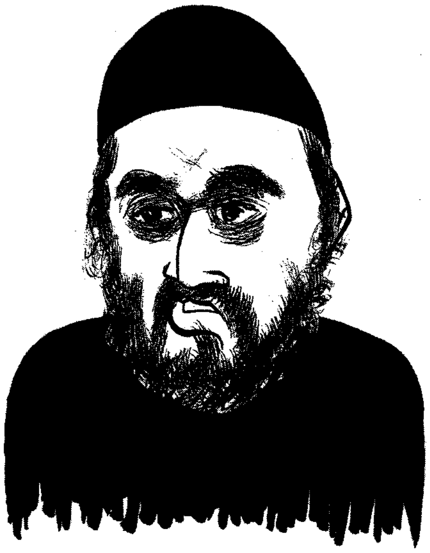
WAR DEPT.
THE TERRORIST



Among those quietly celebrating the death of Abu Musab al-Zarqawi last week, no doubt, were Osama bin Laden and Ayman al-Zawahiri, the leaders of Al Qaeda, who have watched their nominal ally wreck the standing of their organization among Muslims around the world. After Zarqawi began his bloody operations in Iraq, in 2003, support for suicide bombings—the signature of Al Qaeda since the destruction of the American embassies in East Africa, in 1998—plummeted in Islamic countries. Muslims surveyed in the 2005 Pew Global Attitudes Project reported in substantial numbers that Islamic extremism was a threat to their own countries. Jordan, Zarqawi's homeland, seemed to be the exception. Then Zarqawi sent suicide bombers to three hotels in downtown Amman, killing sixty people, including prominent Jordanians and Palestinians, many of whom were celebrating a wedding. The next day, tens of thousands of Jordanians poured into the streets to denounce Al Qaeda.

Zarqawi was the herald of a new generation of terrorists whose roots were in street crime, not in Islamic militancy. A former thief and sex offender, he memorized the Koran while he was in prison, and began issuing fatwas and calling himself "sheikh." "There's certainly been a downgrading of ideological purity," Niall Brennan, a special agent on the joint terrorism task force in the New York office of the F.B.I., told me on the morning that Zarqawi's death was announced. "The next generation is in many respects less disciplined and doesn't have the same respect for command and control." Bin Laden, despite his own appetite for slaughter, disdained Zarqawi's rough manners, prison tattoos, and unruly independence. But after the American invasion of Afghanistan Al Qaeda's founders were immobilized, reduced to making occasional videotapes designed to rouse aspiring jihadis and berate Western leaders. Deprived of the managerial oversight of bin Laden, an international businessman, Al Qaeda began to shape itself around Zarqawi's organizational experience, which is to say that it turned into a gang. This was a model easily replicated by would-be jihadis—as in Madrid, London, Toronto—wherever alienated young Muslims yearned for destruction.

Ayman al-Zawahiri, an Egyptian and the No. 2 man in Al Qaeda, was always closer to Zarqawi than bin Laden was. In 2000, Al Qaeda's Egyptian security chief, Saif al-Adl, helped Zarqawi establish a camp in Afghanistan, near the Iranian border. Young fighters from Jordan, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon—the area historically called the Sham—gravitated to the camp and formed the Army of the Sham. Although Zarqawi was not yet a member of Al Qaeda, he remained under the protection of the Egyptians. According to Iraq's former interim Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, who claims that he discovered the information in the archives of the Iraqi secret service, Zarqawi travelled to Iraq in 1999, around the same time as Zawahiri. Saddam Hussein was courting Al Qaeda at the time. Inspired, perhaps, by Iran's relationship with Hezbollah, he may have believed that he could use terrorists to conduct his foreign policy without undermining his rule. Contrary to Secretary of State Colin Powell's assertion before the U.N. Security Council, in February, 2003, that Zarqawi provided the link to Al Qaeda in Iraq, bin Laden and Zawahiri spurned Saddam's overtures.



Abu Musab al-Zarqawi

After Saddam was overthrown, Zarqawi installed himself as the leader of the Sunni insurgency in Iraq. His ability to act was an affront to the founders in hiding, who were no longer able to control their own organization. Although Al Qaeda was an exclusively Sunni association, neither bin Laden nor Zawahiri had ever authorized an attack on Shiites. One of Zarqawi's first actions, in August, 2003, was to send his father-in-law on a suicide mission to the Imam Ali Mosque, killing nearly a hundred Muslims at prayer. Among them was Ayatollah Muhammad Bakr al-Hakim, who was expected to be a unifying force in Iraq. Zarqawi explained that his goal was to awaken the Sunnis by dragging the Shia "into the arena of sectarian war." Ten days earlier, Zarqawi had destroyed the U.N. headquarters in Baghdad, effectively driving the international-aid community out of the country. These attacks were characteristic of Zarqawi's method, which was to target the people who could turn Iraq into a functioning society—teachers, doctors, courageous political thinkers, anyone with the skill and education to pull the country away from chaos.

Zarqawi also pioneered a new mode of communication. In contrast to bin Laden's sonorous taped declarations on Al Jazeera, in 2004 Zarqawi beheaded a twenty-six-year-old American, Nicholas Berg, and posted the video live on the Internet. In a way, this was as shocking an image as the planes crashing into the World Trade Center. Al Qaeda's founders preferred bombs to butcher knives, but the number of Zarqawi's victims mounted. "It's estimated that Zarqawi killed six thousand people in Iraq," Salameh Nematt, the Washington bureau chief for the pan-Arab daily *Al-Hayat*, told me. "That's twice as many as bin Laden killed on 9/11." Indeed, it is more than bin Laden and Zawahiri have killed in all their operations combined.

Unlike Zarqawi, bin Laden and Zawahiri continued to focus their enmity on the West and on the autocratic rulers of their own countries. "They felt the need to fight on the fringes, in Chechnya, Bosnia, Pakistan, Sudan," Nematt said shortly before Zarqawi was killed. "Once they won on the margins, they would march to the center. Zarqawi turned the tables on them. In bin Laden's view, Zarqawi is leading the Sunnis in Iraq to hell, and he doesn't know what to do. Bin Laden and Zawahiri feel that, if Zarqawi forces the Americans to abandon Iraq, the Shia will go into the Sunni triangle and start ethnic cleansing."

Zarqawi's obsession with the Shia led Zawahiri to write a letter to him last July. "Why were there attacks on ordinary Shia?" Zawahiri demanded. "Can the mujahideen kill all the Shia in Iraq? Has any Islamic state in history ever tried that?" He also said that the grotesque scenes of execution should stop. "We can kill the captives by bullet," he counselled. But in the same note he meekly asked for a hundred thousand dollars for Al Qaeda. Money—especially from Saudi Arabia—that used to go to bin Laden was now going into Zarqawi's treasury.

In recent months, the founders had begun to distance themselves from Zarqawi. Bin Laden's latest communiqué, in April, urged Muslims to wage jihad in Darfur, Sudan, rather than in Iraq, saying that Western involvement in the Sudanese peace process was part of the "crusades against Islam." Soon afterward, Zawahiri congratulated Zarqawi for overseeing more than eight hundred suicide operations, claiming, "This is what has broken the back of America in Iraq." Last week, he offered similar encouragement; still, he directed his attention to Muslims elsewhere. A few days before Zarqawi was killed, Nematt told me, "He is on the edge of declaring total rebellion against bin Laden and Zawahiri. Zarqawi's recruits are growing exponentially. This kid is eclipsing them."

With Zarqawi's death, at age thirty-nine, bin Laden and Zawahiri may try to return Al Qaeda to its more disciplined and popular incarnation, but it is Zarqawi's example that will inspire many in the new generation of jihadis. "It's going to be like Afghanistan all over again," Ali Soufan, a former F.B.I. agent who has interrogated dozens of Al Qaeda members, said. "The difference is that these guys are far more radical."

—*Lawrence Wright*

FACE-LIFT DEPT.
THE NEW BAZOOKA JOE

Last fall, a couple of candy men took a lunchtime stroll around South Street Seaport. The younger of the two was Paul Cherrie, a confectioner who had recently tripled the sales of Dubble Bubble and sold the company to Tootsie Roll Industries for a hundred and ninety-seven million dollars. The older man was Arthur Shorin, the chairman of Topps, which in 1947 created the iconic bubble gum Bazooka. "I am a bubble-gum maven," Cherrie said recently. "You can't help but be in awe of Mr. Shorin. There's only a few of him left."

They were wandering through the Seaport, eating hot dogs, when Shorin turned to Cherrie and said, "You know how good this thing could be." Cherrie knew that he was talking about Bazooka. Once Topps's prize product, the brand had lost its cachet. Cherrie responded, "Mr. Shorin, not only do I know it but I have been coveting this brand my whole career. Nobody understands the power of Bazooka better than I do."

Shorin hired Cherrie as managing director of the Topps Company and authorized him to make over the gum's mascot, Bazooka Joe. As Cherrie saw it, Bazooka's chief problem was the fact that the tiny comics that come wrapped around the gum weren't funny to anyone born after 1962. Example:

Jane says to Joe: "I made this cake myself, Joe!"

Joe: "Jane, this cake tastes awful!"

Jane: "Oh, yeah! Smarty! The cookbook says it's delicious!"

"We had passed from being quaint, cozy humor to being your grandpa's joke," Cherrie, a forty-three-year-old Canadian with a penchant for bright-colored shirts, said recently in the Topps boardroom, on Whitehall Street. A big part of the problem was Joe. "He was a little dweeb," Cherrie said.

Cherrie set out to spruce up Joe's appearance and to surround him with a new group of friends. For inspiration, Topps sent researchers all over the country to quiz focus groups of children who were "claimed bubble-gum users," as Cherrie put it. The kids were asked, "If Bazooka Joe was in a TV show, what would he be like?"

"The guy who came up again and again was the guy from 'That 70's Show,'" Cherrie said. "What's his name again? Kutchermare? The tall guy, dark hair."

Ashton Kutcher? "Right. Kind of goofy but lovable. Fun. Free-spirited. That was the approach we took."

So Joe, who began life fifty-three years ago as a crewcut boy with an eye patch, sprouted a few inches. His blond hair grew out and became fashionably tousled. He kept the eye patch but started wearing his cap backward. To keep him company, Topps artists developed five new sidekicks, including an excitable German named Wolfgang Spreckels. "We want Joe to be beyond this Americancentric guy," Cherrie said. "We have aspirations for him to find his way across the world. What better way to accomplish that than with an exchange student?"

Another of Joe's new pals is Casey McGavin, a tomboy. She likes bleacher seats and watching "SportsCenter." DJ Change, who wears headphones around his neck, is a slouchy music snob. ("You've gotta have somebody who's into the tunes," Cherrie said.) Cindy Lewis is an environmentalist. She likes to hike and volunteer, and she hangs out at the farmers' market. Cherrie said, "A lot of little kids are like this.

"Approximately thirteen per cent of the American population is African-American," he went on. "We'd be foolish to ignore it. But we didn't want to have some stereotypical urban black kid." So Topps created Kevin Griffin, a science geek who travels with an iguana on his shoulder. The only old friend Joe was allowed to keep was Mort, with his spiked hair and trademark turtleneck pulled up over his mouth. "Mort is Kramer for kids," Cherrie said.

Earlier this month, the old Bazooka crew was retired, and the two-inch-high comics began chronicling the escapades of the new Joe and his retrofitted gang. Topps executives hope that the makeover, along with a retooled product line (including softer, squishier gum), will revive sales and mollify mutinous shareholders, some of whom have been pressuring the company to sell off its candy division. In one of the new comics, Joe asks Mort, "How was your date last night?"

Mort: "O.K. We went to see that new zombie movie."

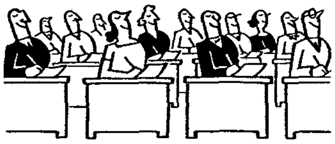
Joe: "Cool! Was it scary?"

Mort puts his hands over his turtleneck and says, "Are you kidding? Ten bucks a ticket? It was horrifying!"

—*Michael Rosenwald*

HALLS OF ACADEME

HOMELAND HOMEWORK



Dear Admissions Officer:

As soon as I read in the *Post* that Long Island University would be offering an online master's program in Homeland Security Management, I knew I had to apply. But then, this month, New York City's antiterrorism funding was cut by forty per cent partly because of a clerical screwup—apparently the application was supposed to be filed electronically, but some weird eighties person faxed it instead, prompting Senator Charles Schumer to explain, "It would be as if you got 800s on your boards and Stanford Law School rejected you because you put the stamp on upside down." Senator Schumer obviously has no clue what it takes to get into grad school in modern times ("Boards"? Try the LSAT, top score 180), but, anyway, his speech made me paranoid. So, even though you don't require an essay, or, even necessarily a bachelor's degree, here are a few words about why I want to come to (or at least send e-mails to) L.I.U.'s Southampton Graduate Campus for my degree in Homeland Security.

My main reason for wanting to obtain this diploma is that, as your Web site puts it, "Homeland Security is among the nation's leading growth sectors." In the ten years since 2002, there will have been, for instance, a 22.4-percent increase in jobs for detectives and criminal investigators—it's like those ads in the subway promising a bright new future, except that we get to learn about dirty bombs and money laundering instead of dental hygiene.

Reconnaissance is crucial to homeland security, and I have been doing some advance planning of my own. Of the five core classes L.I.U. offers, I am particularly interested in HSM 530: Domestic and International Terrorism, for which the syllabus includes stuff like "The Al Qaeda Manual" and "An Outline of the Most Superior Fundamentals in the Art of Kidnapping Americans." For my electives, I'm thinking about HSM 670: The Economics of Terror and Extremism ("Week 7: Focus on Diamond Smuggling" looks especially fascinating) and HSM 710: Weapons of Mass Destruction. I'm also looking forward to the practicum requirement. In an internship as an airport security manager, for instance, it would be educational to experience the passenger-screening process as a wander rather than as a wandee.

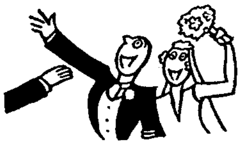
I expect to absorb many important lessons from my fellow-students, most of whom, as your literature explains, will already be working in the field full time. I'm passionate about discussing issues like the *hawala* remittance system with such diverse classmates as a practicing attorney, a SWAT-team commander, and a Suffolk County beat cop just back from a year in Falluja. Also, I am impressed that you have appointed a former police officer and Fulbright scholar, Dr. Vincent Henry, as your director. (Only three law-enforcement officers in the country have earned both Ph.D.s and Fulbrights, and all of them, I understand, teach in the program.) Professor Henry currently instructs an intelligence-function course that I would like to take, HSM 540. For each unit, he posts a Question of the Week online and asks his students to discuss it. "I had an N.Y.P.D. captain," he said, "who came back with a two-thousand-word footnoted response about Chinese tactics and the availability of trucks during the Chosin Reservoir invasion."

Given the demographics of the industry, I feel very comfortable with the concept of distance learning—it would be tough to start a chapter of the Young Republicans or throw a fun interdepartmental mixer with a student body that, so far, is ninety per cent men over forty. In fact, the institute's philosophy of "asynchronous" learning, which says that "students are not required to be in a particular place at a particular time," is one of its most attractive aspects. (I would have arranged an informational tour of the H.S.M. campus, but, as Professor Henry says, "we really only exist as a cloud of electrons.") And, since the brochure notes that the administration is "particularly sensitive to the needs and objectives of busy homeland security professionals," I feel confident that my undergraduate disciplinary record will not pose any obstacle to my acceptance. Should a certain incident come to your attention, please let me remind you that the public-safety officers at my university have not benefitted from the rigorous training that your institution provides.

Thank you for your consideration.

—*Lauren Collins*

TASTE TEST
WEDDING TIME TRAVEL



When Toni DeLisi got married, in 1986, her wedding met the standard criteria of the day among Italian families in New Jersey. "My hair was big; my dress was pouffy; I had a band that I hated," she said the other day, with fond reminiscence. "It was on the water—at the Nyack something. It's now a psychiatric hospital." DeLisi is the head of the New Jersey chapter of the Association of Bridal Consultants, and her recollections were prompted by a visit, in the company of three other members, to a matinée of the Broadway musical "The Wedding Singer." Like the movie upon which it is based, the show charts the romantic travails of an entertainer and a waitress at the Touch of Class Catering and Banquet Hall in Ridgefield, New Jersey, and offers a sentimental tour through the popular culture of the nineteen-eighties, incorporating Van Halen licks, A Flock of Seagulls hair, and a Cyndi Lauper impersonator, all of which are greeted by the audience at the Al Hirschfeld Theatre with the same inexplicable enthusiasm shown by the public at large two decades ago.

For the professional wedding planner, the show consists not just of a flashback to bubble-skirted bridesmaid dresses, wedding gowns with sleeves like flotation devices, and vivid cummerbunds paired with dinner jackets abbreviated at the waist. It also offers a glimpse of a time before the advent of such innovations as the response card offering entrée pre-selection, the pet dog as ring bearer, or the need for a professional wedding planner to manage all the other innovations.

"Twenty years ago, the wedding was five hours—it wasn't this series of events it is now," DeLisi said, over a glass of Pinot Grigio at Charly O's, after the curtain fell. "Twenty years ago, everyone had prime rib," she said. "Now it's filet mignon, sea bass."

"I think our taste has gotten better since the eighties," said Julia Erlichman, a planner from Hoboken who referred to herself as "the queen of beachy weddings," and who had just planned the celebration of a couple who, despite being in their sixties, had insisted on throwing the bouquet. Erlichman's Web site features a photograph of Romeo, her now deceased standard poodle, that is part homage, part marketing tool. "I get all the dog people," she said. "If you need your dog to be in your wedding, call me." She explained that, while no one has balloons at weddings anymore—the Touch of Class facility in the show is decked with them—one popular new item is the chocolate fountain. "It's like the whiskey-sour fountain I had at my bat mitzvah, but with chocolate," she said.

The assembled planners noted that the Touch of Class hall was not the type of venue at which the weddings they orchestrated were usually held; but they all agreed that the significance of the role of the wedding singer transcended distinctions of class and taste. "You can almost have bad food, but you have to have a good wedding singer," Erlichman said. "The music is sort of the glue," said Lynn Schlereth, a planner from Short Hills.

The biggest danger is when the entertainment threatens to upstage the bride, Christine Figliuolo, a planner from Waldwick, said. "They literally take over," she added. Fortunately, weddings usually provide enough drama to compete with the most aggressive of performers. "I planned one wedding for a bride who cried every time I met with her," Figliuolo said. "At the wedding, the guests all had tears in their eyes, and not tears of happiness. A month later, the bride called me and said not only was the wedding awful but the honeymoon was awful, and everything since had been awful." Divorce followed swiftly, but the bond between bride and planner endured, according to Figliuolo. "She told me, 'Chris, when I plan my next wedding I want to plan it with you.' "

—*Rebecca Mead*

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LIFE AND LETTERS

THE INJUSTICE COLLECTOR

Is James Joyce's grandson suppressing scholarship?

BY D. T. MAX

June 16th marks the hundred-and-second anniversary of Bloomsday, the date on which the events in James Joyce's "Ulysses" take place. There will be the customary commemorative celebrations surrounding Leopold Bloom's famous walk through Dublin: public readings and festivals in cities around the world, including Dublin, New York, Berlin, Paris, St. Petersburg, and Melbourne. In Budapest, two hundred or so academics will convene a Joyce symposium—the twentieth to be held on Bloomsday.

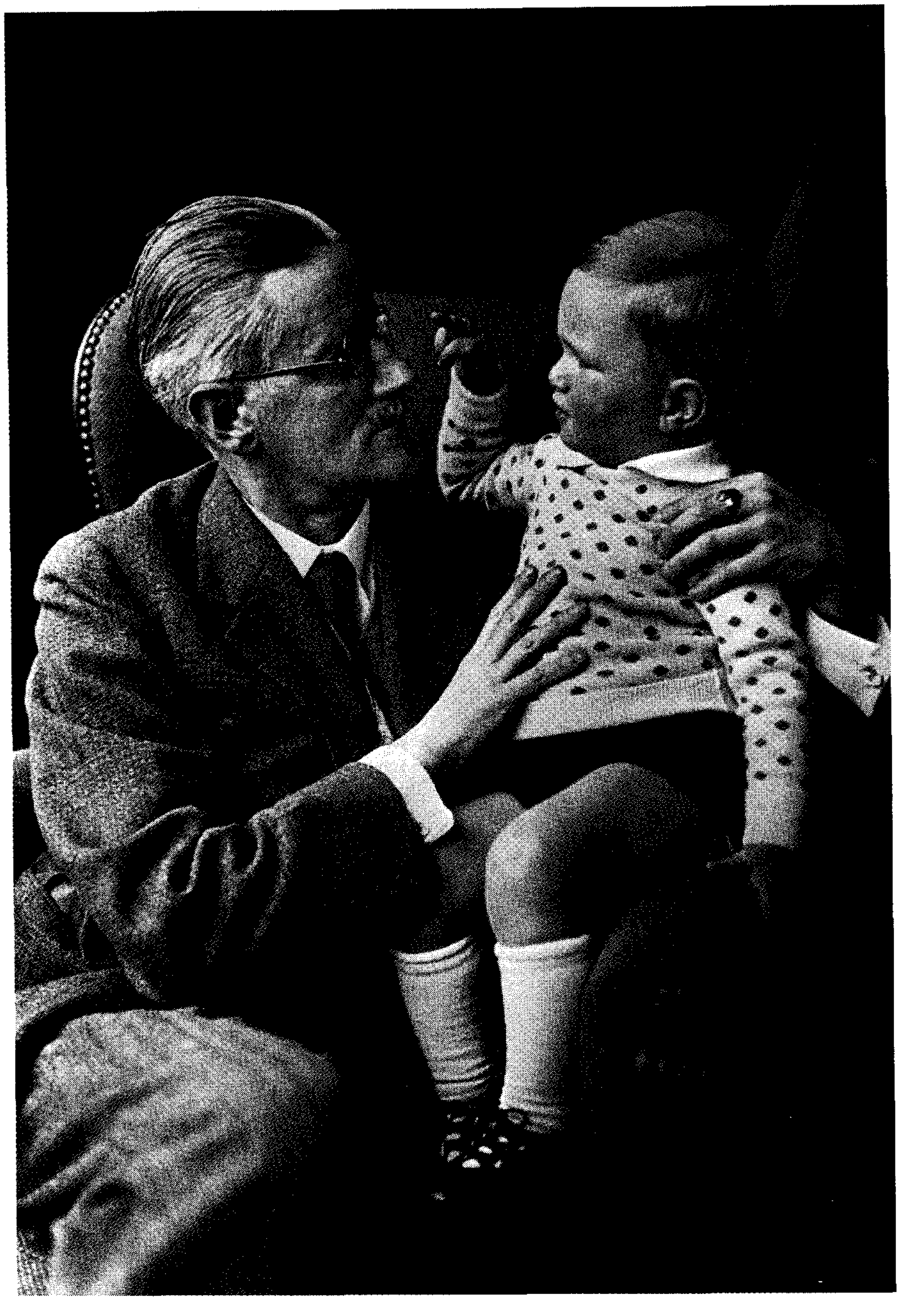
There is a chance that Joyce's grandson, Stephen Joyce, will go to Budapest. He lives in the French town of La Flotte, on the Île de Ré, off the Atlantic Coast. He loves the island, which is the Martha's Vineyard of France, but he has sometimes been willing to leave it when academics have invited him to attend Joyce commemorations and symposia. The scholars' courtesy is, in part, tactical: Stephen is Joyce's only living descendant, and since the mid-nineteen-eighties he has effectively controlled the Joyce estate. Scholars must ask his permission to quote sizable passages or to reproduce manuscript pages from those works of Joyce's that remain under copyright—including "Ulysses" and "Finnegans Wake"—as well as from more than three thousand letters and several dozen unpublished manuscript fragments.

Sometimes, Stephen has declined an invitation to a gathering but then appeared anyway; more than once, he has insisted that the assembled scholars make room for him on their program. The aim of his presentations has been to question the value of academic criticism. "If my grandfather was here, he would have died laughing," he likes to say. At a 1986 gathering of Joyceans in Copenhagen, he explained that "Dubliners" and "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man" can be "picked up, read, and enjoyed by virtually anybody without scholarly guides, theories, and intricate explanations, as can 'Ulysses,' if you forget about all the hue and cry."

Stephen is a handsome man of seventy-four, with a gray beard, sloping forehead, and deep-blue eyes—he looks the way Joyce might have looked if he had not smoked and drunk himself to death, at fifty-eight, in 1941. Stephen sometimes walks with an ashplant, just as his grandfather did. At academic conferences, he is combative and sardonic. "I am a Joyce, not a Joycean, and there is more than a nuance to that fact," he often says. And he insists on being addressed as Stephen James Joyce, his full given name.

His audacity and his pique have amused some Joyceans, and at times the Joyceans have provoked him. "Should you care to observe some of our proceedings or interfere with them, you would be welcome to join us at any stage—and naturally, the usual conference fee would be waived," an invitation to a 1996 Zurich Bloomsday symposium read. Stephen wrote back, "When you and your colleagues disagree, have opposing views, or engage in unseemly scholarly brawls this constitutes dialogue, exchange of views, differences of opinion. When I express my opinions orally or in writing this is labeled 'interference'—most instructive and interesting."

Over the years, the relationship between Stephen Joyce and the Joyceans has gone from awkwardly symbiotic to plainly dysfunctional. In 1988, he took offense at the epilogue to Brenda Maddox's "Nora," a biography of Joyce's wife, which described the decades that Joyce's schizophrenic daughter, Lucia, spent in a mental asylum. Although the book had already been printed in galleys, Maddox, fearing a legal battle, offered to delete the section; the agreement she signed with Stephen also enjoined her descendants from publishing the material. Shortly afterward, at a Bloomsday symposium in Venice, Stephen announced that he had destroyed all the letters that his aunt Lucia had written



James and Stephen Joyce, in 1934. Stephen was almost nine when Joyce died.

BETTMANN/CORBIS

to him and his wife. He added that he had done the same with postcards and a telegram sent to Lucia by Samuel Beckett, with whom she had pursued a relationship in the late nineteen-twenties.

"I have not destroyed any papers or letters in my grandfather's hand, yet," Stephen wrote at the time. But in the early nineties he persuaded the National Library of Ireland to give him some Joyce family correspondence that was scheduled to be unsealed. Scholars worry that these documents, too, have been destroyed. He has blocked or discouraged countless public readings of "Ulysses," and once tried unsuccessfully to halt a Web audiocast of the book. In 1997, he sued the Irish scholar Danis Rose, who was trying to publish a newly edited version of "Ulysses," calling it "one of the literary hoaxes of the century." (Around the same time, Stephen expressed his intention to obstruct a proposed new edition by the American scholar John Kidd; he told the chairman of Kidd's publisher, W. W. Norton, that he was "implacably opposed" to the project, which was never completed.) According to Hans E. Jahnke, Stephen's stepbrother, who once had a stake in the Joyce estate, the suit against Rose, which lasted five years, cost the estate roughly a hundred thousand dollars. The estate won the case. In 2004, the centenary of Bloomsday, Stephen threatened the Irish government with a lawsuit if it staged any Bloomsday readings; the readings were cancelled. He warned the National Library of Ireland that a planned display of his grandfather's manuscripts violated his copyright. (The Irish Senate passed an emergency amendment to thwart him.) His antagonism led the Abbey Theatre to cancel a production of Joyce's play "Exiles," and he told Adam Harvey, a performance artist who had simply memorized a portion of "Finnegans Wake" in expectation of reciting it onstage, that he had likely "already infringed" on the estate's copyright. Harvey later discovered that, under British law, Joyce did not have the right to stop his performance.

Stephen has also attempted to impede the publication of dozens of scholarly works on James Joyce. He rejects nearly every request to quote from unpublished letters. Last year, he told a prominent Joyce scholar that he was no longer granting permissions to quote from any of Joyce's writings. (The scholar, fearing retribution, declined to be named in this article.) Stephen's primary motive has been to put a halt to work that, in his view, either violates his family's privacy or exceeds the bounds of reputable scholarship. The two-decade-long effort has also been an exercise in power—an attempt to establish his own centrality in regard to anything involving his grandfather. If you want to write about James Joyce and plan to quote more than a few short passages, you need Stephen's consent. He has said, "We have proven that we are willing to take any necessary action to back and enforce what we legitimately believe in." Or, as he put it to me during two phone calls that he recently made to me from La Flotte, "What other literary estate stands up the way I do? It's a whole way of looking at things and looking at life."

The first time that Stephen called me, he seemed to be in a good mood. He said that he and his wife, Solange, had just returned to La Flotte from a trip. He noted that a letter I had sent requesting an interview had pleased him, but added, "I am not ashamed of my middle name. It's Stephen *James* Joyce." (The second call was less cordial, and he declined my request to visit him in France.)

In our conversations, Stephen spoke proudly about his fights with scholars. "I am not only protecting and preserving the purity of my grandfather's work but also what remains of the much abused privacy of the Joyce family," he said. He added, "Every artist's born right is to have their work . . . reproduced as they want it to be reproduced." This was particularly important in the case of Joyce, whom he calls Nonno—the Italian word for grandfather. Stephen said that Joyce's genius could be found in his several books. (His own library of Joyceana, he once told *Le Monde,* "is less than a metre wide.") He did not see what the two hundred and sixty-one works of criticism in the catalogue of the Library of Congress, say, could add to this legacy. Academics, he said at one point, are "people who want to brand this great work with their mark. I don't accept that."

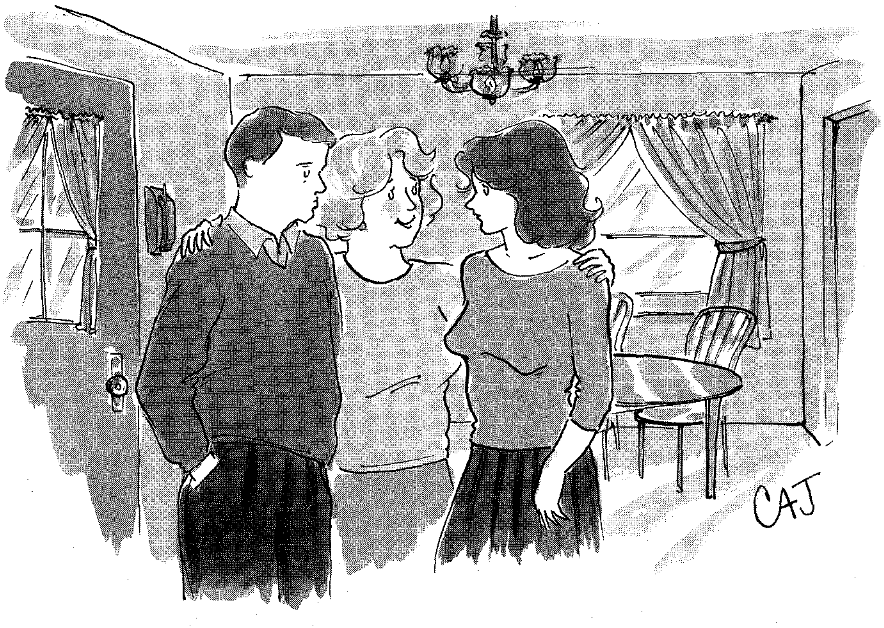
He depicted himself as an average reader who wanted other average readers to share in the pleasure of what he had discovered only later in life. In school, he once said, English was his worst subject; for many years, he had been intimidated by his grandfather's writing, and had not read it. Eventually, he said, he read "Dubliners," then moved on to "A Portrait of the Artist" and "Ulysses." (He did not mention "Finnegans Wake.") He had found the books not only readable but appealingly human. "As I got older, I realized Joyce is *not* the difficult writer they say he is," he said. "When they say, 'We've done so much for him,' I think, What about the thousands, not to say millions, of readers they scared off? All this *crap* they write—that's good old American slang!"

To him, the three books form a single *Bildungsroman* closely based on James Joyce's own experiences. "The sixteenth of June is 'Ulysses' Day," he said. "Bloom is not mentioned until the third chapter. Why is so much more, then, written about Leopold Bloom?" His relationship with the characters was the reverse, he implied: "Stephen Dedalus is, in a very important sense, Nonno's character."

Stephen discussed some of his ground rules for dealing with scholars. He looked askance at academics whose requests contained typographical errors; such slips promised sloppy scholarship. More important, he added, the Joyces' private life was "no one's fucking business." (This claim, it can be argued, clashes with his notion that Joyce's work is essentially autobiographical.) And then there were the Irish. If he ever had the energy, he said, he would write a book on "the shitty treatment my grandmother and grandfather got from their country of origin." Nora had contemplated reburying Joyce's body on native soil—he had been buried in Zurich during the Second World War—but Irish officials rebuffed the idea. Worse, when Joyce died, Ireland did not send a representative to his funeral. Stephen had been almost nine, and he saw the family's dismay. "I will *never* forgive that," he said.

Stephen was funny and playful on the phone, although a subtext of anger was often evident. Acknowledging his pugnacity, he said, "It is better to be pissed off than pissed on." He said that he didn't much like the work of Vladimir Nabokov, though perhaps he had just "read the wrong book"; he admired William Styron's "Tidewater Tales"; and he thought "the only worthwhile book published in the past twenty years" was a novel by the Irish writer John McGahern. He also admired the poet Patrick Kavanagh, who had written the first anti-Joyce-industry poem, in 1951: "What weapon was used / To slay mighty Ulysses? / The weapon that was used / Was a Harvard thesis."

Stephen's parents, Giorgio Joyce and Helen Kastor Joyce, had lived in the New York City area during part of the nineteen-thirties, and Stephen's English was infused with the slang of that era. He talked about opening his "yap" and "getting a fair shake." He also displayed many of his grandfather's traits: the passion, the certainty, and the sense of aggrievement. (Leon Edel, the biographer of Henry James, memorably called Joyce "the Injustice Collector.") Stephen had a melancholy side to him as well. "I have no children," he said. "The line dies with me." He wondered if his focus on the estate had "ruined" his wife's life. And he told me, "Stephen James Joyce is weary with hunting and fain would lie down"—quoting the ballad "Lord Randall." Moments later, however, he'd be swearing once again to defend the estate. Academics, he declared, were like "rats and lice—they should be exterminated!"



"You fight, you don't have sex—isn't it time you two tied the knot?"

Stephen Joyce is hardly the first executor of a literary estate to resist the agenda of scholars. T. S. Eliot's widow, Valerie, has opposed all biographies of her husband in the forty years since his death, and has withheld the balance of his letters—a first volume appeared in 1988—for almost two decades. A former assistant, writing in an English newspaper last year, recalled Valerie's distaste for members of the "Ph.D. industry" and her "dry, formal, excessively polite notes giving them the least help possible." Marianne Craig Moore, the niece of Marianne Moore, has been unusually strict with permissions; in 1989, she demanded that a biographer remove all quotations from the poet's unpublished letters. Ted Hughes destroyed Sylvia Plath's journal of their last months together. "I did not want her children to have to read it," he said.

Stephen has made his presence felt on a much broader front. Most prickly literary estates are interested in suppressing unflattering or intrusive information, but no one combines tolltaker, brand enforcer, and arbiter of taste as relentlessly as Stephen does, and certainly not in such a personal way. In 2003, Eloise Knowlton, a Joycean and a novelist, asked permission to publish a fictional version of "Sweets of Sin," the risqué novel that Bloom picks up for his wife, Molly. ("Ulysses" offers only a glimpse of its contents.) Stephen wrote back, "Neither I nor the others who manage this Estate will touch your hare-brained scheme with a barge pole in any manner, shape or form." When turning down a request for permission from an academic whose work was going to be published by Purdue, he said that he objected to the name for the university's sports teams: the Boilermakers. (He considered it vulgar.) Michael Groden, a scholar at the University of Western Ontario, spent seven years creating a multimedia version of "Ulysses," only to have Stephen block the project, in 2003, with a demand for a permissions fee of one and a half million dollars. (Before Stephen controlled the Joyce estate, such fees were nominal.) Groden's sin was to have praised Danis Rose's edition of "Ulysses" as "confident and controversial," in a reader's report for Rose's publisher; he had also helped the National Library of Ireland to evaluate some Joyce drafts prior to acquiring them. "You should consider a new career as a garbage collector in New York City, because you'll never quote a Joyce text again," Stephen told Groden.

Stephen's hostility toward scholarship is striking, considering the intricate and allusive nature of his grandfather's work. Interpreters were there at the beginning—Stuart Gilbert's guide to "Ulysses" appeared in 1930, only eight years after the book's European publication. And it is hard to imagine Joyce's books without all the books that have been written about them. As Joyce told one of his translators, "I've put in so many enigmas and puzzles that it will keep the professors busy for centuries arguing over what I meant, and that's the only way of insuring one's immortality."

It is also not easy for scholars to decode Joyce's puzzles without addressing his personal life. Joyce frequently said that he drew his events from the newspapers and his observations from his life. "I'm like a man who stumbles," he once said. "My foot strikes something, I look down, and there is exactly what I'm in need of." In "Finnegans Wake," Joyce describes a character whose work is written "over every square inch of the only foolscap available, his own body."

More than a dozen Joyce scholars told me that what was once an area of exploration and discovery now resembles an embattled outpost of copyright law. Robert Spoo, who used to edit the *James Joyce Quarterly*, which is published by the University of Tulsa, quit the job to become a copyright lawyer. "New biographies, digital representations of Joyce's work, analyses of Joyce's manuscripts, and, to a lesser extent, criticism—they hardly exist," he said. "People either despaired of doing them . . . or the demands were so high that they just didn't feel it was worth continuing the discussions." Although more than fifteen hundred letters and dozens of manuscript drafts have been discovered since Stephen gained control of the estate, scholars told me that no new biographies of Joyce or his family are under way. The estate has not licensed online versions of "Ulysses" and "Finnegans Wake," seminal works for hypertext theory. Anyone who plans to study Joyce today has to wonder whether it will be worth the strain. In 2003, Thomas Staley, the director of special collections at the University of Texas, in Austin, folded the *Joyce Studies Annual* after twelve years, in part to avoid dealing with Stephen. "He is an almost impossible person," Staley told me. (Buck Mulligan to Dedalus: "O, an impossible person!")

Once, the death of a major literary figure marked the moment when scholars could interpret his work with genuine freedom. After Proust died, for example, academics began excavating the connections between his homosexuality and his art. Yet when Stephen Joyce succeeded in muffling a whole field of study with a combination of litigation and bravado, others took notice. Paul Zukofsky, the son of the poet Louis Zukofsky, said of Stephen's efforts, "What I've heard sounds very, very good. He is a staunch defender of rights." The Samuel Beckett estate sues theatre companies that mount unorthodox productions of the plays. A year after Stephen announced his suit

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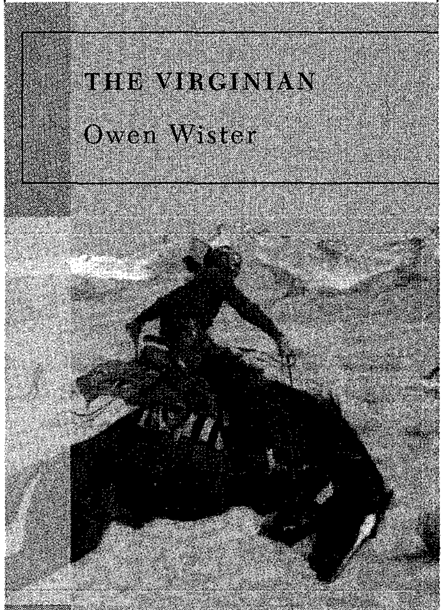

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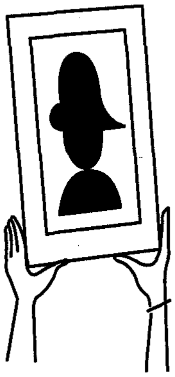
against Danis Rose's "Ulysses," the Nabokov estate fought an unsuccessful battle to prevent the publication in English of "Lo's Diary," an Italian novel based on "Lolita."

Joyceans find it especially galling that the estate representing one of the most censored writers of his day—"Ulysses" was banned in America until 1934—has itself become a censor. A few have been outspoken in their anger. Michael Groden, the Western Ontario professor, recently gave a talk at Cornell about the Joyce estate, during which he projected images from a book called "Take the Bully by the Horns: Stop Unethical, Uncoöperative, or Unpleasant People from Running and Ruining Your Life." Others have tried to befriend Stephen, even knowing that such ententes usually end badly. Sam Slote, the co-editor of the forthcoming book "How Joyce Wrote 'Finnegans Wake,' " who enjoyed Stephen's patronage for a time, joked, "It's sort of like the moment of death. You know it's coming. You just don't know when and you don't know why." Some scholars plan to wait until Joyce's unpublished writings enter the public domain, in 2012.



This is a risky strategy, however, because copyright law has proved to be highly elastic. Copyright has its origins in eighteenth-century English law. In America, the idea that authors and inventors, for a time, should exclusively collect profits from their work was embraced by Congress, which initially provided for copyright to extend for a maximum of twenty-eight years after a work's creation. But over time the copyrights for recordings and Hollywood films proved extremely valuable, and American corporations persuaded Congress to lengthen the term of protection again and again. (Writers and their estates were the accidental beneficiaries of this process.) Most recently, in 1998, Congress added twenty years to the term of copyright. As a result, any work created by an individual is now protected for at least seventy years after the creator's death. Had the bill not passed, the burst of American creativity in the nineteen-twenties and thirties—everything from Bugs Bunny to "Rhapsody in Blue"—would have soon passed into the public domain. Disney, for instance, would have lost the rights to Mickey Mouse in 2003. (Critics call the 1998 extension, which Disney lobbied for heavily, the Mickey Mouse Protection Act.)

There is an element in American copyright law that allows people to make "fair use" of protected work: a scholar, critic, journalist, or parodist may reproduce a modest portion without permission. But "fair use" has proved extremely hard to define. How many words can be quoted? From how many works? What about unpublished texts? Moreover, European law does not explicitly recognize "fair use." As a result, Joyceans are often unsure if they are violating the law, and when the estate objects they usually give in.

Yet, for the first time, a Joycean is fighting to free herself from Stephen's control. In 2002, Stephen learned that Carol Loeb Shloss, an English professor at Stanford, was about to publish "Lucia Joyce: To Dance in the Wake," a life of his mentally ill aunt. Stephen wrote to Shloss, implying that he might sue if she quoted from copyrighted material. He pressured her publisher, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, which asked Shloss to cut many quotations. An expurgated version of the book was published in December, 2003.

In the midst of her fight with Stephen, Shloss met Lawrence Lessig, a law professor at Stanford, who was willing to take on her case pro bono. Lessig had just argued before the Supreme Court against Congress's 1998 extension of copyright. He had lost the case, but he was eager to find another way to show that distended copyright laws were not in the public interest. Shloss gave him the correspondence that Stephen had sent her over the years, and he was excited by what he read. "The letters were extreme," he recalled.

This week, to coincide with Bloomsday celebrations, Lessig plans to file a suit against Stephen Joyce in United States District Court. He believes that it is the first to accuse a literary estate of "copyright misuse"; the charge is usually levelled against corporations in patent disputes. Lessig is a capable lawyer, and at Stanford he has considerable resources; four attorneys work on his staff, and he has free help from law students. "It's in the DNA of lawyers not to be intimidated," he said. In other words, Lessig intends to fight on and on, just as Stephen Joyce does.

For all the enmity Stephen Joyce has aroused, it can be argued that he has succeeded in fulfilling his grandfather's wish to have his life and work treated with respect. As Richard Ellmann's splendid 1959 biography points out, James Joyce was a strict guardian of his own image. In "Finnegans Wake," he coined the word "biografiends" to describe nosy academics. He fought Herbert Gorman, his authorized biographer, whenever Gorman's idea of Joyce's work diverged from his own. And he demanded that Gorman "obliterate" a passage revealing that Joyce and Nora had not married before leaving Ireland, in 1904, meaning that Lucia and her brother Giorgio were illegitimate. A half-dozen times in his life, Joyce threatened or filed lawsuits. The publication of "Dubliners," in 1914, required seven solicitors, in part because he refused to remove pointed references to actual people and places. Some of the lawsuits were justified—he sued an American publisher who pirated "Ulysses"—but others were misguided attempts to protect his dignity. He charged an actor with slander after the actor told others that Joyce owed him a hundred and fifty francs. He eventually withdrew the suit, an episode that is amusingly revisited in Tom Stoppard's play "Travesties."

Upon Joyce's death, however, a different set of hands began to shape his image. His will gave control of his literary estate to Harriet Shaw Weaver, his patron. (Nora Joyce, his wife, received all the royalties but did not have an active role in the estate.) Weaver's stance, and that of the trustees who succeeded her, was that Joyce should be made accessible to the world. Revelations followed: Joyce's 1919 affair with Marthe Fleischmann, in Zurich; his brazenly erotic 1909 letters to Nora (in one, he calls her a "darling brown-arsed fuckbird"). In 1951, Nora died, and her children, Giorgio and Lucia, became the beneficiaries of the estate. They were not in a position to mount a vigorous opposition to scholars: Lucia was institutionalized, and Giorgio had a severe drinking problem. According to Hans Jahnke, who is Giorgio's stepson from his second marriage, Giorgio was mostly interested in the money that the estate generated, and he left the details to others.

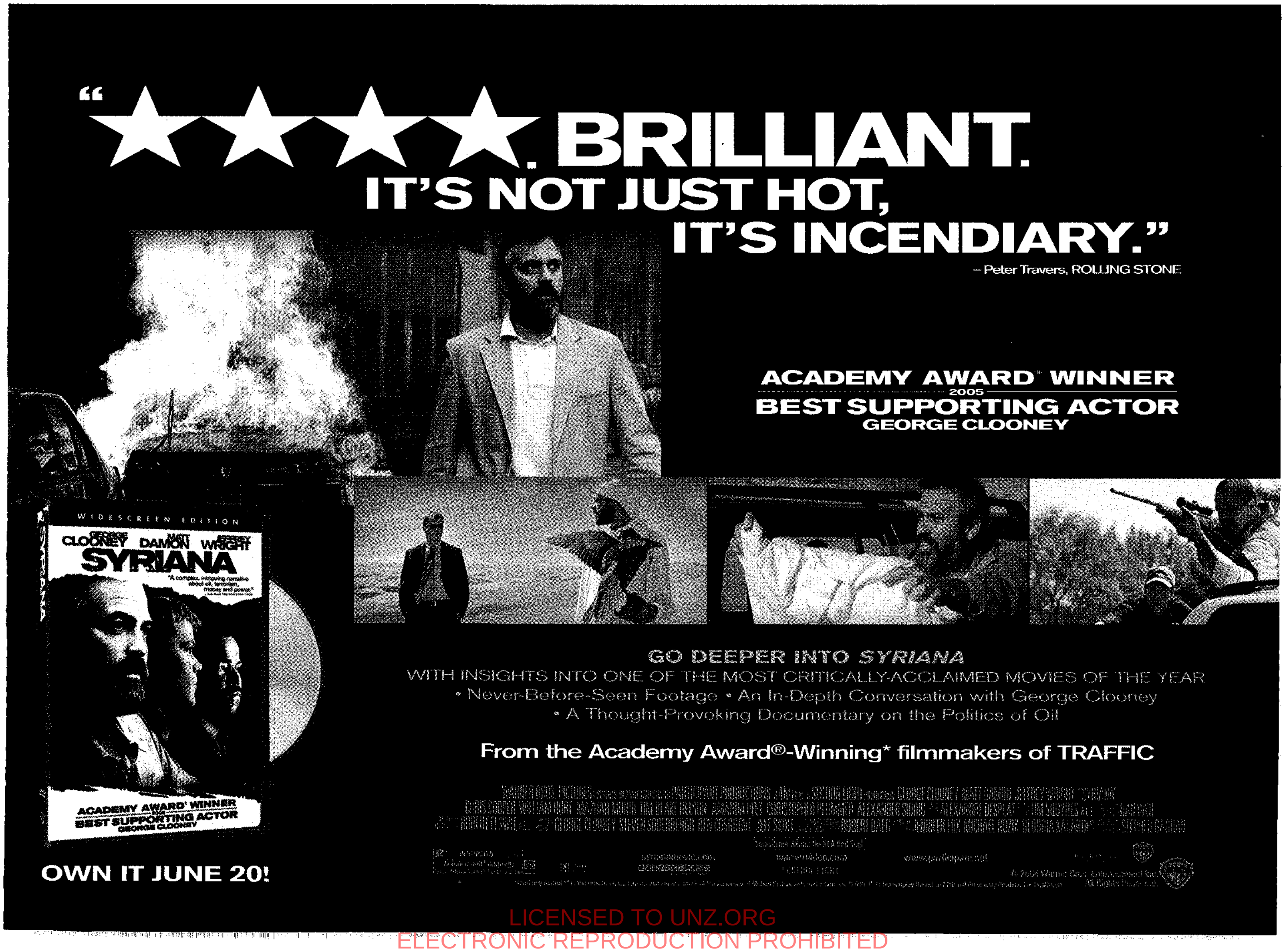
But Stephen, by then in his thirties, was angered by the way that academics were circumventing the wishes of the estate. For instance, when the estate registered its desire to keep Joyce's erotic letters to Nora private, Ellmann maneuvered around it. His 1959 biography alluded to the correspondence; his 1966 volume of Joyce's letters contained expurgated versions of the letters; and his 1975 "Selected Letters" contained every word. In 1909, Joyce had implored Nora to "be careful to keep my letters secret." Stephen viewed the letters' publication as a transgression against his family.

Stephen Joyce was born in February, 1932, during a chaotic month for his grandfather. "Ulysses," published in France in 1922, had finally found an American publisher who would challenge its purported obscenity in court. Fragments of "Finnegans Wake" were appearing in print, and friends and patrons—even the usually docile Harriet Weaver—were expressing grave doubts about the book's merits. And Giorgio had just taken Lucia to a psychiatric clinic, following an outburst on Joyce's birthday.

The birth of Stephen came soon after the death of Joyce's father, whom Joyce had romanticized as the source of his talent. Joyce commemorated these events in the poem "Ecce Puer," which begins, "Of the dark past / A boy is born; / With joy and grief / My heart is torn." Stephen—German Jewish on his mother's side, Irish on his father's—was a beautiful baby. His mother, Helen, in an unpublished memoir that is housed in the archives of the University of Tulsa, describes him as "a handsome lively, wavy haired blonde, with bright blue eyes not as dark as his fathers and rosy cheeks and a bright smile (my smile, I think)." Joyce put the boy on his lap and told him stories. In 1936, he wrote Stephen a children's story, "The Cat and the Devil." Helen, in her memoir, captures their growing rapport: "As Stevie grew older I loved to watch him crawling onto his grandfather's knee and asking him grave little questions. His serious childish face was charming to see as he listened to the slow and painstaking answers that [his grandfather] gave him in his slow careful Dublin drawl. [Joyce] was infinitely patient with him and was always willing to stop and talk to him or to answer as he grew older his incessant 'whys.' The answers needless to say were always wonderful ones."

The marriage of Stephen's parents rapidly dissolved. Giorgio, deciding that he and Helen were incompatible, largely abandoned the family, and when Stephen was six, Helen, suffering from depression, checked herself into a Swiss clinic. Stephen spent more and more time with his grandparents. He and Joyce took regular walks along the Zürichsee. Joyce bought him a box of toy soldiers. Helen recalls in her memoir, "I do not think that Stephen will ever forget his famous grandfather and their relationship was a deep and lovely one." Even now, when Stephen has to make important decisions about the estate, he sometimes goes to Joyce's grave to consult with him.

After the Second World War, Helen's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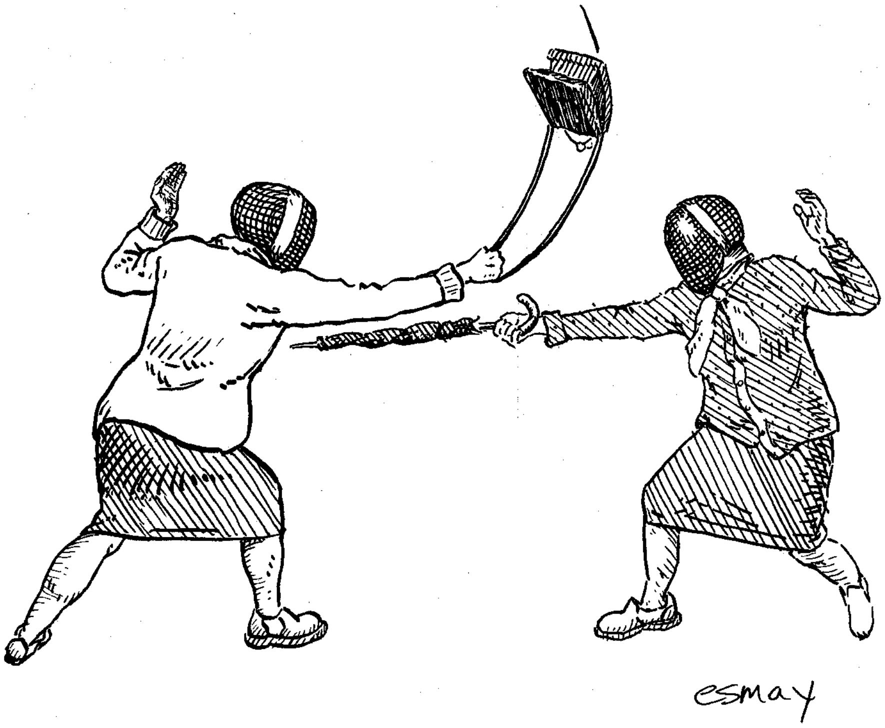

family sent Stephen to Andover, where, in 1948, he wrote an essay about his grandfather, titled "The Man Whom I Loved and Respected Most in This World." Yet being related to a genius was also a burden. When Stephen was at Andover, this magazine wrote about him in The Talk of the Town. After Stephen recalled of Joyce, "He used to drop in before breakfast to talk to me about Greek mythology," he was asked if he remembered who Daedalus was. He responded, "Wasn't he a Greek in a big battle with somebody?" Some members of Joyce's retinue found Stephen a disappointment. In 1955, Maria Jolas, a friend of the Joyces, wrote a letter to Harriet Weaver, saying that Stephen had been "invited to leave Harvard because he wouldn't study." Jolas added, "I find his idle, intellectually mediocre existence deplorable," and suggested that Stephen had an "unjustified arrogance."

Stephen graduated from Harvard after eight years, in 1958. A year later, he became an aid official for the Organization for Economic Coöperation and Development, specializing in French sub-Saharan Africa. He stayed for more than thirty years, travelling frequently to Africa; his last position, according to the agency, was as a "mid-level manager." In 1991, he retired, and, as he wrote in a Harvard alumni publication, he began devoting himself to "the intricate and complicated job of running my grandfather James Joyce's literary estate." Until the mid-nineteen-eighties, he received no money from the estate.

According to the French scholar Jacques Aubert, during Stephen's years with the O.E.C.D. he often told Joyceans that "there are some things more important than going to literary conferences." But he had never stopped caring about his grandfather and the Joyce estate. In 1959, while living in Paris, he wrote to Ellmann, who had just sent him a copy of his Joyce biography. Ellmann's comprehensive interviews and persuasive reading of the life had been widely praised, but Stephen saw things differently: "Reading parts of your book did something to me deep down inside. I can best describe the feeling as one of hurt, sadness, disgust and in the end even anger. . . . All our inner secrets are bared for all to see, read about, and gloat over if they so desire." Ellmann wrote back, "There is no doubt that biographies are hard for the survivors, yet . . . this is the price of greatness."

In 1982, Lucia Joyce died; Stephen was one of her heirs. After negotiations with family members, Stephen acquired a fifty-per-cent stake in the Joyce estate. Eleven years later, Giorgio's second wife, Asta, died, and half of Giorgio's stake in the estate devolved to Stephen, giving him seventy-five-per-cent control. (Hans Jahnke and his sister Evelyn held the rest.) Before long, Stephen launched his expensive suit against Danis Rose's edition of "Ulysses." In 2000, Jahnke, who had to pay some of the legal fees, offered to sell Stephen his family's share in the estate. Jahnke, a professor of international development who lives in Berlin, recalled, "There was too much anger, too much work, and too many lawyers." The change was fine with Stephen: he preferred to stand alone.

In 1988, Carol Shloss began investigating the story of Lucia Joyce. Shloss didn't see Lucia as schizophrenic; rather, she saw her as a frustrated genius. James Joyce might well have supported this notion, for he had never accepted that his daughter was mentally ill. "Whatever spark or gift I possess has been transmitted to Lucia, and has kindled a fire in her brain," he said in 1935.

Shloss was particularly interested in Lucia's possible influence on "Finnegans Wake." Joyce had almost invited this reading. In a letter to Harriet Weaver, he wrote, "She is a fantastic being, speaking a curious abbreviated language of her own. I understand it or most of it." Lucia had schizophrenic symptoms—her sense of time and relationships was abnormal—and she was a dancer. "Finnegans Wake," as Shloss saw it, was characterized by word dissociation and informed by a dancer's sense of movement. "Something creative, compelling, and possibly dangerous had been going on between two extraordinary people," she later wrote. Over time, what began as a study in artistic influence became a biographical portrait.

One thing that had drawn Shloss to writing about Lucia was her absence from previous accounts of the Joyce family. Ellmann had accepted the traditional account of the relationship, calling Joyce "foolish fond like Lear" for investing so much time in trying to prevent Lucia's institutionalization. Maddox's epilogue on Lucia's later years had been suppressed. Contemporary accounts belittled her. Of the thousand letters that Shloss estimates Lucia wrote, only a dozen were in the archives; the rest had disappeared. Shloss suspected that Stephen had pulled documents relating to Lucia from the National Library of Ireland when he had obtained permission to remove papers from its archive. Yet when Shloss visited the library, she found something that had perhaps been overlooked: Lucia's medical bills. She made copies, and spent a year placing them against the doctors' published writings, reconstructing Lucia's treatment. Shloss speculated that either Joyce or Giorgio might have engaged in incest with Lucia, but there was no documentation to prove it. (This theory, which most Joyceans do not share, was based partly on "Finnegans Wake": Joyce implies that Issy, who is somewhat modelled on Lucia, has been violated by her father and her brothers.) As Shloss saw it, patriarchal suppression was forcing her book to become "an incredible act of circumlocution."

In 1994, Stephen Joyce learned of Shloss's project, and was displeased. Many of Lucia's extant papers reside at SUNY-Buffalo. Robert Bertholf, the archive's director at the time, said that Stephen delivered an indirect "warning" to him from intermediaries "in Europe," communicating his wish that Shloss be prevented from using its archives. (Stephen denied this.) Bertholf, who had secured a valuable arrangement to publish Joyce's detailed notebooks for "Finnegans Wake," was wary of angering Stephen, but he quietly allowed Shloss access. According to Shloss, during the time that she was consulting the archive, Bertholf picked her up in his car each morning and escorted her into the library before it opened. She added that he never officially signed in, to hide the fact that she had visited the library. (Bertholf said that this protocol was not unusual.)

Although Shloss was aware of Stephen's opposition to her project, she wrote him a letter in 1996, asking for his "blessing." She thought that Stephen might appreciate her view that Lucia was misunderstood, not mentally ill. He answered, "My response regarding helping and working with you on a book about Lucia is straightforward and unequivocal: it is a definitive NO. Our experience with Brenda Maddox has taught us not to work with anybody doing a book about, or on, any member of the immediate Joyce family. We have learned our lesson well!"

Shloss was shaken, but she didn't abandon the project. For one thing, she concluded that, despite Stephen's assertions, he did not control the copyright to Lucia's work: the nephew of her last caregiver did, and he gave his approval. (David Monro, a lawyer for the Joyce family, said that an agreement made after Lucia's death gave Stephen the copyright to her papers.) Moreover, American copyright law at that time provided that unpublished work was protected for only fifty years after an author's death. Considering that Joyce had died in 1941, Stephen was not in a position to stop her.

In 1998, Congress passed the bill extending copyright protection to seventy years after a creator's death. James Joyce's unpublished writing was now under Stephen's control until 2012. Nevertheless, Shloss finished her manuscript and sold it to Farrar, Straus & Giroux in 2000. Shortly afterward, Stephen sent her a letter, warning her that he would not give her permission to quote from any document that was under his control. When an attorney for the publisher wrote Stephen to say that the book would limit its quotations to seven thousand words, following the provisions of "fair use," Stephen responded that "this sounds like a bad joke." Copyright, he wrote, was meant "to protect the author's rights as well as those who inherited them, which is my case with respect to James Joyce." He noted, "You should be aware of the fact that over the past decade the James Joyce Estate's 'record,' in legal terms, is crystal clear and we have proven on a number of occasions that we are prepared to put our money where our mouth is."

Shloss had half expected Stephen to challenge her, but she was saddened by the response of other Joyceans. A number of them told her that she should have known better than to write about Lucia. She attributed this reaction to the "climate of fear Stephen causes." Some Joyceans told me that their critiques were more principled. Luca Crispi, a research fellow at the National Library of Ireland, said that Shloss's project was filled with "innuendos" and was "not worthy of its subject." Nevertheless, he agreed with Shloss's point about Joyce's grandson: "Stephen's ruined what was otherwise a wonderful working community."

In June, 2003, Shloss attended a Joyce conference in Tulsa. Sam Slote, who was then working at SUNY-Buffalo, let Shloss know that Stephen expected him to report back on a presentation she was giving on Lucia. Slote, who was uncomfortable in such a role, told me he informed Stephen that he didn't go to the lecture because "everyone suspects me of being a spy."

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Meanwhile, Farrar, Straus & Giroux was determined to publish Shloss's book, but it was wary of provoking a lawsuit; Shloss and her editor, Elisabeth Sifton, began making extensive cuts. For example, Shloss had originally quoted a statement that Joyce made to Michael Healy, Nora's uncle, describing Lucia's "form of mental or nervous malady." Joyce argued, "The real trouble is not violence or incendiarism or hysterics or simulated suicide. These are hard to deal with but they prove that the person is still alive. The real danger is torpor [and] losing more and more contact with the outer world." All but the last sentence was excised.

In an e-mail, Sifton reassured Shloss that the cuts had not compromised her book: "I honestly don't think it was a better book when you quoted ten thousand words of Joyce than when you quote only six thousand." Shloss, however, has said that "the process of deleting things that had taken years to find out was just excruciating." She had tried to get Stanford to indemnify her from a lawsuit. But lawyers at the university said that it did not offer protection for a professor's books. An individual risk policy cost fifteen thousand dollars, more than she felt she could afford. So Shloss began searching for another way out of the "mousetrap" that Stephen Joyce had sprung on her.

I met with Lawrence Lessig one afternoon last month, in the garden of the Stanford Law School, in Palo Alto. Lessig is the co-founder of Creative Commons, a popular online copyright-licensing project. That effort, combined with his fight against the 1998 Copyright Term Extension Act, has made him a leading authority on intellectual-property issues. In the 2003 Supreme Court case Eldred v. Ashcroft, Lessig argued that the Founding Fathers did not intend copyright to become a creative straitjacket. He quoted the Constitution to the Justices: "Congress shall have power to . . . promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing for limited times to authors and inventors the exclusive right to their respective writings." Lessig had clerked for Justice Antonin Scalia, and he expected him and the conservatives on the Court to respond to reasoning based on the original words of the framers. "But the conservatives sat silent," he said. "It was, in some ways, the dying moments of a naïve law professor."

CHEMOTHERAPY

My friend is going through the fire on his knees,
His hands, crossing the entire field of it;
Once in a while he calls out, bewildered,

The other side unclear, wanting to just
Lie down and wait among the scattered stones.
Unimaginable heat: he pants, lost in the light

Of what keeps happening—think water, think water,
And he manages to make out one nurse
Up against the bright and it takes everything

To tell her what he needs, as if he had come upon
The one tree still standing, and understood
She promises nothing, who in her uniform

Was all that was ever asked for and who
Could hold him as he has never been held.

—*Sophie Cabot Black*

Lessig thinks that Shloss's case is more likely to succeed. "Have you seen her?" he said of Shloss. "She's the quintessential academic—quiet, soft-spoken, modest. The idea that copyright law is going to descend on her and turn her life into hell shows that the law has lost touch with its purpose."

In March, 2005, Lessig had suggested that Shloss prepare to post on a Web site material she had deleted from "To Dance in the Wake." He then wrote to Stephen's lawyers, explaining that the purpose of the Web site would be "to aid scholars and researchers," and that, even though Farrar, Straus had asked Shloss to delete the material, the quotes fell under the doctrine of "fair use." On April 8th, Joyce's solicitors replied, expressing displeasure that Shloss was revisiting the subject of Lucia. Two weeks later, Lessig's office reiterated that the Web site would eventually be going online. (The site has not yet been made accessible to the public.) That May, the estate's lawyers wrote back that "Mr. and Mrs. Joyce have requested we convey their 'astonishment' " at "an unwarranted infringement of the Estate's copyright" and hinted at legal consequences. Lessig—with the help of Robert Spoo, the scholar-turned-lawyer, and David Olson, a Stanford associate—then prepared the suit.

Of the two dozen people I had talked to, Lessig was one of the few who weren't angry at Stephen Joyce. "I don't really blame people who exercise the rights the law appears to give them," Lessig said. "Stephen Joyce is using whatever power he has." But he added that Stephen had strengthened Shloss's case with the threatening letters, the calls to her publisher, the alleged spying and attempts to block her research. As Lessig saw it, the case was simple: Shloss was not trying to profit in an unseemly way off the Joyce legacy; she was an academic who was trying to make a literary argument. It was not at all important whether her argument was correct—only that it was a legitimate effort. To make her case, she needed supporting documents, and Stephen's obstructionism had, perhaps, adversely affected the reception of the book. The *Times*, for example, had described it as "more like an exercise in wish fulfillment than a biography."

"If a copyright holder misbehaves, we want people to know it's not costless," Lessig added. "It's not just the tone of Stephen's letters. It's who the letters were sent to: researchers, archivists, and librarians, people playing by the rules. It ought to be possible for people to be good."

Around this time, Stephen called me again from La Flotte. He didn't want to discuss Shloss's book. The first time we spoke, he had called it "the biggest pile of horse and cow manure. You'd want to mix it up and put it in a great big bucket." This time, he said simply, "It's so full of nonsense it's not even funny. There is, of course, the freedom of scholars."

Since his fight with Shloss, he had found a new source of resentment. In 2004, the International James Joyce Foundation, a group of scholars, had formed a fact-finding commission to collect stories about the Joyce estate's behavior. (Shloss and Spoo were members of the commission.) The foundation had written to Stephen to say that its goal was not to indict him; it simply wanted to clarify the rights of scholars. But Stephen considered the letter a hostile act. He said, "I am not the Italian Mafia. I am not the Russian Mafia." He went on, "I have to be very careful what I say. Too much is at stake for me. Are these boys the C.I.A., the F.B.I.?" He said of the commission, "So far, I've been handling it by ignoring it. But I'm getting prepared to lower the boom." He did not yet know about Shloss's impending suit.

A person with knowledge of the Joyce estate's finances said that it generates three to four hundred thousand dollars annually. Stephen therefore has money at his disposal for a protracted legal fight. He does not have a bad case, either: over the decades, judges have consistently confirmed the right of estates to exercise a firm hand. F. Scott Kieff, an intellectual-property specialist at Washington University, in St. Louis, said, "It would be really bad if Shloss won. If all I need to do to get access to your property is to say that the restrictions that you are using are unfair—and by unfair I only mean unpopular—then anyone who is unpopular loses their property rights."

The victor in a lawsuit is sometimes determined by stamina. And, as Stephen reminded me several times during our conversations, when it came to stamina he was without peer. He recalled that he had successfully fought to recover two Joyce keepsakes that had remained in the SUNY-Buffalo collection for forty years: a charm engraved with the words "Finnegans Wake" and a pen that Joyce had used to sign copies of that book. "How many people will fight on and on for something they believe in?" he asked me. "It is a typical Stephen James Joyce story." ♦

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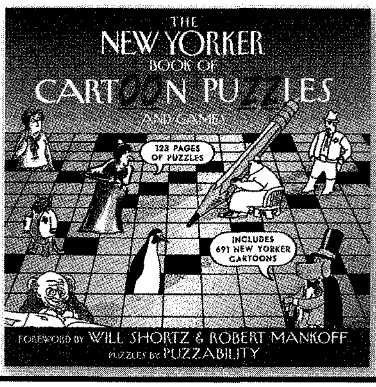
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SHOUTS & MURMURS

I'M AFRAID I HAVE SOME BAD NEWS

BY LARRY DOYLE

You might want to sit down. I wouldn't sit like that. You're going to develop a real nice case of lumbosacral strain, and it's going to hurt for the rest of your life. You'll end up going to a chiropractor twice a week for the next sixteen years, and every time you go he's going to ask you if you've been doing your exercises and you're going to admit that you lost the sheet, and he's going to give you another sheet and charge you a hundred bucks. Meanwhile, the pain will be getting worse and you won't feel like having sex anymore and your husband is going to start looking around, and who could blame him—you've gone from being a reasonably attractive wife to a whiny sack of no sex.

Your husband? I'll get to him.

So he's out there, banging some hooker (not wanting to start a relationship, out of respect for you), completely unaware that he's being filmed for an HBO documentary. Of course, he catches this new hepatitis G, which makes hepatitis C look like hepatitis A, and which also makes your kidneys explode, possibly harming innocent bystanders. You, in turn, are going to take up with your chiropractor, the only man still willing to touch you, and that's going to get expensive.

So, if I were you, I'd sit up straight.

Anyway, your husband has what we call a "medical condition." Without getting too technical, I should warn you that this next part is going to make me look smart and you feel stupid, and it's also pretty gory.

Your husband was admitted with extreme pain in the abdomen, which is obviously not our fault. Now, pain in the abdomen can be caused by any number of things, from comical food poisoning, which strikes in the middle of a fancy dinner party, to fatal—or *noncomical*—food poisoning, to a three-hundred-pound tumor composed of hair and teeth, possibly the overgrown unborn twin that his mother mourned instead of ever loving him.

We didn't want to rule anything out, so we opened him up.

There were no multi-hundred-pound tumors; that's the good news.

However, it's a real mess in there. There's a lot of intestinal tubing squishing around—what you call "guts"—as well as an assortment of small, esoteric organs they don't spend a lot of time on in medical school. And bear in mind that everything's pretty much the same color, not like in the textbooks.

After securing the kidneys as a precaution, I took a step back and opened the floor to suggestions. This is a teaching hospital, so there's always a bunch of smart-ass interns wandering around thinking they know everything. The "diagnoses" put forth—crazy, scary stuff—were summarily dismissed, because God forbid one of these snot-nosed wanna-docs is right.

PHILIPPE PETIT-ROULET

I did a little preliminary exploratory surgery, employing what is known as the "scream test," which involves poking various organs and seeing if the patient responds. This usually indicates a problem. The procedure is trickier when the patient is sedated, of course, but I've been known to get a decent scream out of patients who were technically dead. So I did some poking and prodding, but then I remembered that I had this eye appointment, so I decided to close him up. And that's when . . . well, you might want to stand up and sit back down again. I don't know why; I find it helps, and I'm the doctor.

First, the good news. Your husband's portfolio looks great; I can't believe he got into Apple at 12—pre-split 12. I'd say the prognosis for your long-term financial health is excellent. However, last month your husband dumped seventy-eight thousand dollars' worth of Clo-Pet, the pet-cloning outfit, two days before it was revealed that Dr. Kalabi was not in fact cloning clients' beloved companions but instead was creating look-alikes using plastic surgery and transplanting pieces from other pets. Yesterday, the S.E.C. and the I.R.S. swooped in and froze all your husband's accounts—which may explain his abdominal pain—and then, talk about bad luck, this morning the C.E.O. of your health-insurance carrier fled to Argentina with a transgender dominatrix, owing me literally millions of dollars.

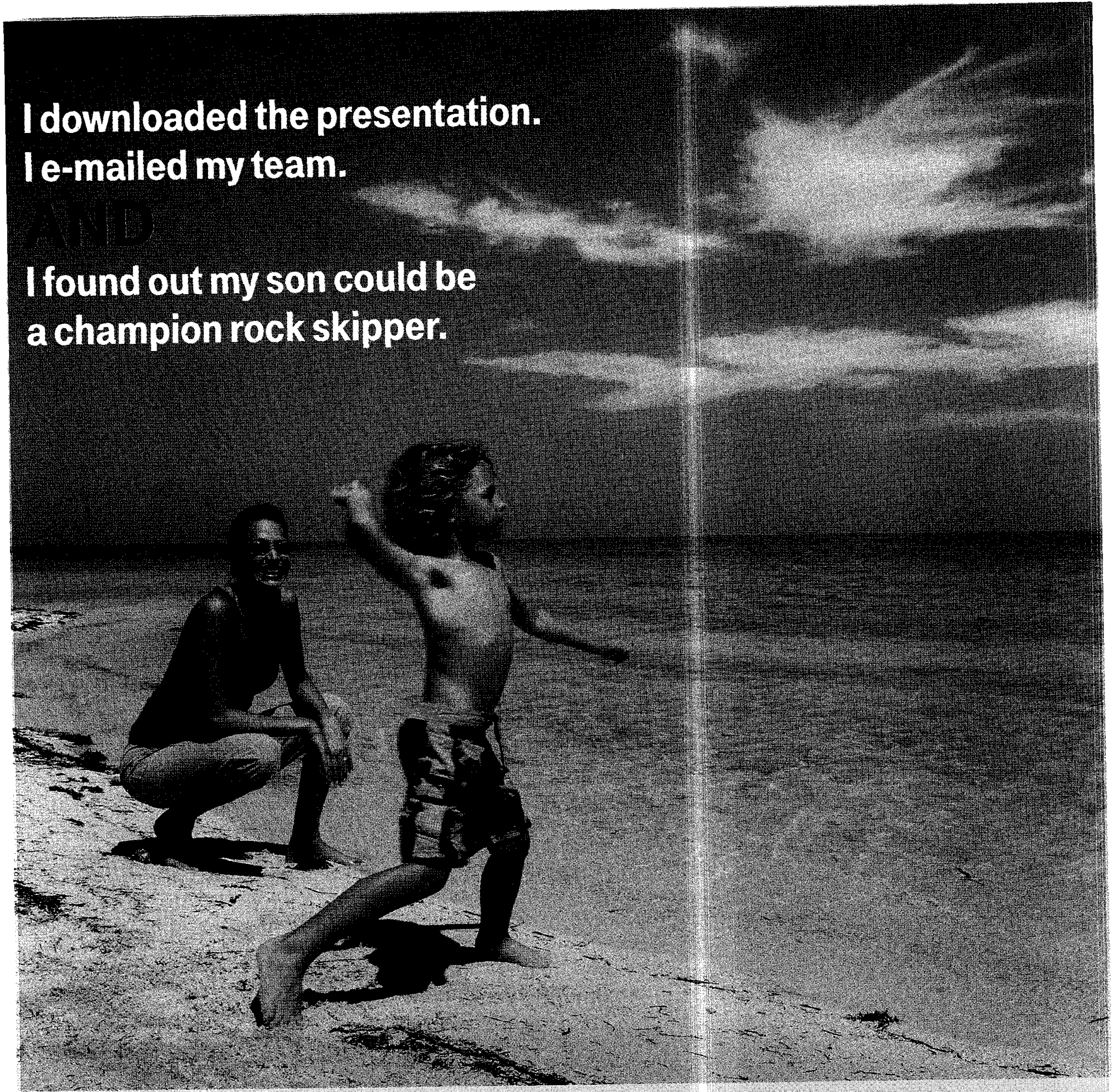
So, unless you've got fourteen thousand dollars in cash or a certified check, I'm going to have to leave Douglas wide open on the table.

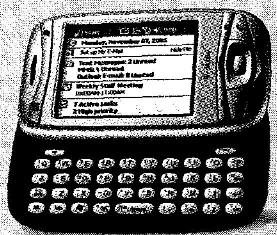
Excuse me? He's not your husband? Then whose—

God damn it. I'm going to have to go through that whole thing again. Great. O.K., well, then, who is your husband?

Oh.

I'm afraid I have some very bad news. ♦


I downloaded the presentation.
I e-mailed my team.
AND
I found out my son could be
a champion rock skipper.



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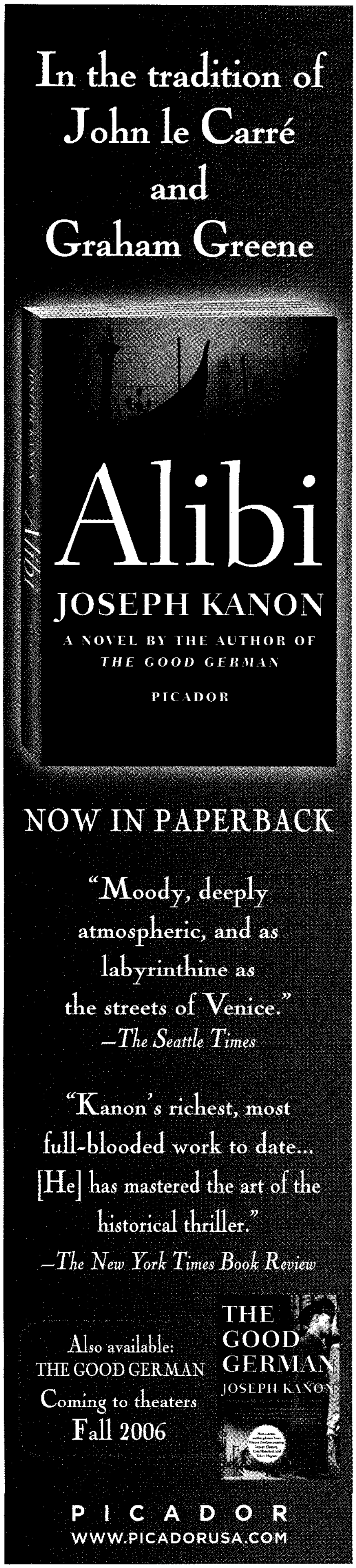

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ANNALS OF HOLLYWOOD

THE CAMERAMAN

Gregg Toland's cinematographic revolution.

BY HILTON ALS

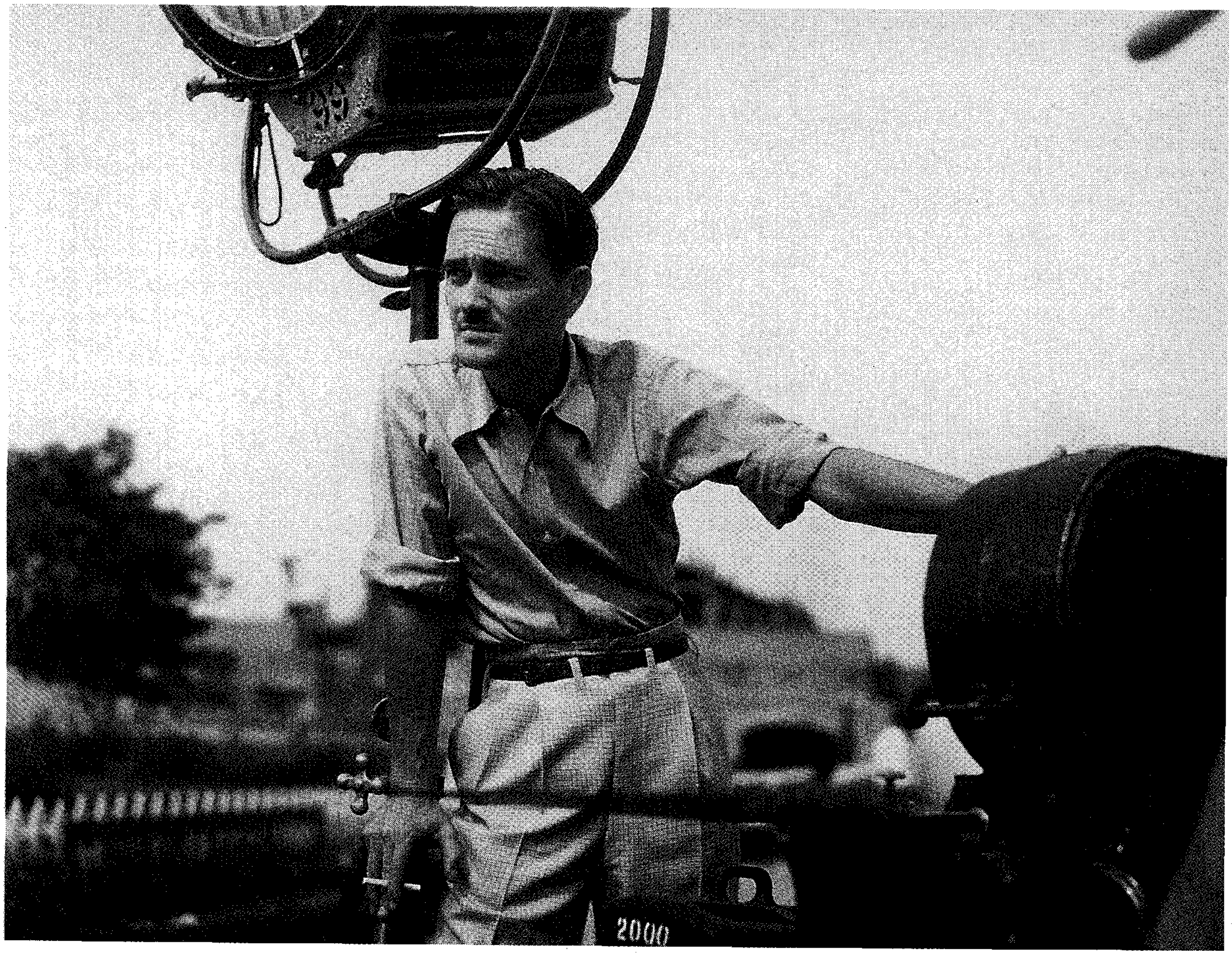
Flashback: 1936, Hollywoodland. An ambitious young director named William Wyler has made his way from Alsace to Southern California, where he plans to contribute a few new frames to the collective American dream—the movies. Already, "forty-take Willie," as more than one disgruntled star has called him, has put John Barrymore through his paces for the 1933 Elmer Rice-scripted weepie "Counsellor at Law." Now he has joined forces with the independent producer Samuel Goldwyn to begin the next phase of his career. For his first Goldwyn feature, "These Three"—penned by Lillian Hellman—Wyler has been paired with a cinematographer he's never worked with before, the thirty-two-year-old Gregg Toland. Like many other directors of the era, Wyler regards cinematographers as little more than glorified mechanics. In the past, he has often directed the camerawork himself. "I was in the habit of saying, 'Put the camera here with a forty-millimeter lens, move it this way, pan over here, do this,'" Wyler remarked, in Jan Herman's 1996 biography, "A Talent for Trouble." This approach doesn't work with Toland: after several days, he asks Goldwyn to transfer him off Wyler's set. When Wyler, bruised, demands an explanation, he learns that, with Toland, "you didn't tell him what lens to use, but what you wanted. And he would help you by suggesting the best way to photograph it." The two men reconcile, and go on to make six films together, including "Wuthering Heights" (1939) and "The Best Years of Our Lives" (1946). "We discussed every move," Wyler said. "He was an artist."

In the contemporary handheld-camera and reality-TV world, the idea of attaching a sophisticated lens to the process of seeing has become passé: few, given the seemingly universal artlessness that characterizes our news of the world today, have any interest in cinema as language. Still, Toland—who, by the time of his death, in 1948, at the age of forty-four, had filmed sixty-seven features, ranging from "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940) to "Song of the South" (1946)—remains essential to the grammar of filmmaking. "He thought like a cutter," the director Steven Soderbergh, who shot his last seven features himself, told me. "Which is to say, he did the hardest thing ever for a filmmaker: keeping the whole movie in your head, so that there's continuity of vision when you get in the editing room." Harris Savides, the cinematographer responsible for "Elephant" (2003) and for the extraordinary two-minute closeup of Nicole Kidman in "Birth" (2004), said, of "Intermezzo" (1939), which Toland filmed, "It's one of the most beautiful movies ever shot. The matureness of the mise en scène—it's great photography without showing off." He added, "If we shot black-and-white now, maybe we could catch up to what Toland was doing then." "Have you seen 'The Long Voyage Home'?" Soderbergh asked of John Ford's 1940 black-and-white feature about men at sea, which Toland also filmed. "It looks like it was shot *tomorrow*."

Many of the techniques that Toland helped pioneer have since become standard practice. Before Toland, for instance, most Hollywood fare had actors shot straight on, sitting or moving around naturalistic sets. By the mid-thirties, when Toland began producing his most resonant work, he was shooting actors with an impressionistic flair—filming them from below, with the ceiling pressing down on them, or positioning them in front of mirrors. He also developed the first lighting cues that could accurately imitate the flickering warmth of candlelight. For "The Long Voyage Home," he devised a system to reflect the ripples of water onto the faces of the sailors.

For his second project with Wyler, the 1937 movie "Dead End" (also written by Hellman), Toland was given the task of simulating daylight on a soundstage. (Wyler wanted to shoot on location, but Goldwyn, anxious to retain control of the movie, wouldn't allow it.) To replicate the high-contrast look of bright sunlight, he bunched together eight strong arc lamps on one large parallel pole. Other cinematographers might have given the "Dead End" set two looks at most: one for day, and one for night, with no chiaroscuro. Toland, however, wanted to show how lighting could—literally—shed light on the movie's dark characters. In the film, we meet Francey (Claire Trevor), a faded, spent prostitute whose former lover, a gangster named Baby Face Martin (Humphrey Bogart), has returned to New York's East Side, in the hope of rekindling their affair. He hasn't seen Francey for years, and he doesn't know how she makes her living now. She quickly disabuses him of his dreams. "You been looking at me like I used to be!" she exclaims, pushing him away. For a moment, she stands in a shaft of hard, white sunlight that makes her blond hair and pale skin appear even whiter and harder, while Martin shrinks away, retreating deep into shadow. A kind of visual dramaturge, Toland offered a cinematographic counterpoint to the emotional tension—love, despair, hope—that the actors sought to convey. "When photographing a thing, he wanted to catch the mood," Wyler said.

"Forget the camera," Toland told aspiring cameramen. "The nature of the story determines the photographic style. Understand the story and make the most of it. If the audience is conscious of tricks and effects, the cameraman's genius, no matter how great it is, is wasted." Toland's insistence that photography should serve the narrative—he was also a great reader of books—was most impressive when the narratives, like Wyler's, had a slightly cynical take on capitalism and its effect on the poor. The bleak poeticism of his lighting design and composition was reminiscent of the work of Walker Evans. In "The Grapes of Wrath," when the Joads enter a migrant camp in California the camera sits on the dashboard of their truck like a weary passenger, a witness to America's "invisible" class. For "The Long Voyage Home," Toland used the ship's cramped space to emphasize the unrest among the sailors; a palette of sombre grays and blacks conveys an atmosphere of perpetual night. The women on the islands where the men dock from time to time are lit lusciously, as if through dew—their soft, open naturalness a marked contrast to the sailors' sharp profiles. Toland's visual sympathies clearly lay with the dispossessed.



"Of all the people who make up a movie production unit, the cameraman is the only one who can call himself a free soul," Toland said.

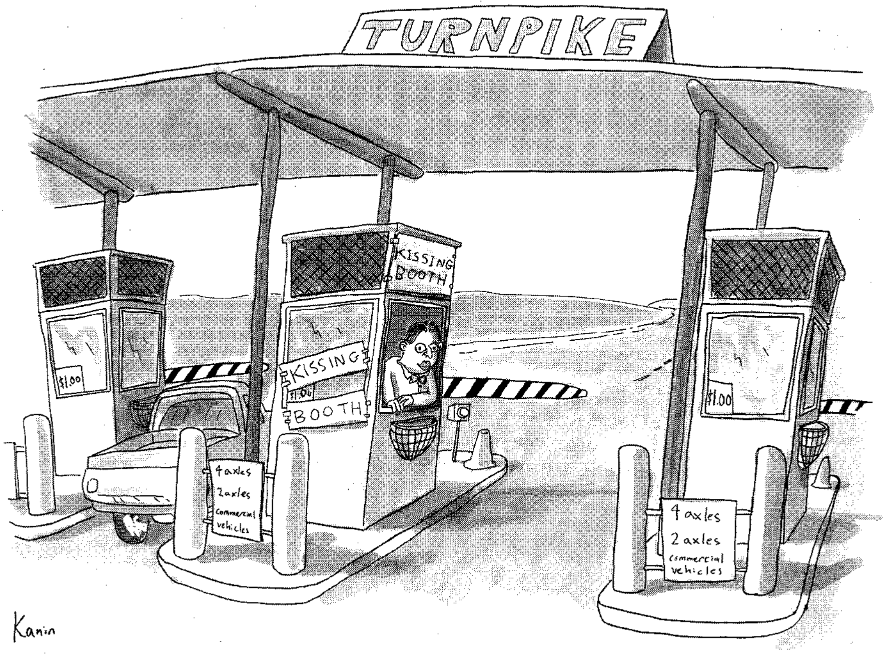
PHOTOFEST

A wispy, laconic man of five feet one, Toland was born in Charleston, Illinois, deep enough in the Bible Belt for him to be interested in the look of things outside it. The Tolands were originally from the South, and Toland's great-grandfather Benjamin Franklin Toland was a notorious "copperhead," or Southern sympathizer, in a Union-friendly city on the Mason-Dixon Line. According to Joy Pratte, an Illinois-based scholar, Benjamin Toland was beaten up by Union soldiers on the courthouse steps in Charleston, an event that precipitated the Charleston riot of 1864, in which nine people died and twelve were injured. Toland's maternal relatives, the Turmans, were at the opposite end of the political spectrum. They had immigrated from France to Pennsylvania before settling in Illinois; Toland's maternal great-grandfather was a bugler in the Union Army.

Jennie Turman and Frank Toland married in 1903; Gregg, their only child, was born in 1904. After a failed attempt at farming outside Charleston, the family moved back to town, where Jennie worked as a switchboard operator and enrolled her son in a free lab school devoted to training teachers. In 1910, Jennie and Frank divorced acrimoniously, and, a few years later, she decamped for Los Angeles, where she and Gregg lived with her brother, Warren, who became something of a father figure to his nephew. (After the move, Toland saw little of Frank, who went on to work as a railroad conductor for more than two decades.) In 1915, however, Warren died of coronary thrombosis. After the funeral, Jennie wrote to her mother, "I'm frightened about Gregg. The shock has nearly killed him, he fainted twice today at the funeral, he won't eat a thing and is just grieving his self to death."

Jennie was her son's main source of emotional and practical support. She also seems to have been the source of his ambition, and Pratte speculates that it was through Jennie's work as a housekeeper for people in the movie business that Toland first found employment. By the time he was fifteen, he was working as an office boy at the William Fox Studios. Fox's biggest stars then were Tom Mix, Theda Bara, and the romantic idol John Gilbert. Later in life, Toland said that when he first saw a cameraman cranking up a camera on the Fox lot he found it "so glamorous . . . I made up my mind that's what I wanted to be." In his early days as an assistant cameraman, he was so taken with the camera that he "used to stay on nights and polish it." "It just seemed exciting to sling a tripod over your shoulder, and it seemed mysterious to go into a darkroom and load film," he told one interviewer, adding, "And besides, an office boy in those days made twelve dollars a week, and an assistant cameraman made eighteen."

Toland was forced to learn on the job, and he did so quickly and effectively. His dedication impressed his superiors, and he was soon earning sixty dollars a week. (Eventually, he became the highest-paid cameraman in the business.) On the Fox lot, he worked with a number of cinematographers whose style had a lasting influence on him; among them was Arthur Edeson, a former portrait photographer who built strong, graphic compositions using shadows as a motif, and who went on to shoot "Casablanca." (Edeson explained that his technique was based on employing "lighting ideas I had learned in my portrait work—a suggestion of modelling here, an artistically placed shadow there. . . . This was so completely out of line with what was considered good cinematography in those days that I had to use my best salesmanship to convince everyone it was good camerawork.")



In 1926, when Toland was twenty-two, he went to work for the pioneering cinematographer George Barnes. The man behind the camera for the 1922 version of "Peg o' My Heart," with the legendary Laurette Taylor, Barnes was also later responsible for the visually sumptuous look of Hitchcock's 1940 thriller, "Rebecca." Barnes's shadow-filled rooms contributed to the psychology of a scene, and he included ceilings in the composition of his shots, which often had the effect of making characters look dwarfed by their surroundings. Not long after Toland became his assistant, Barnes was hired by Goldwyn—a stroke of luck for Toland. The affiliation with Goldwyn "gave Gregg the opportunity to be with a company that was truly independent," Stanley Cortez, a contemporary of Toland's and an esteemed cinematographer ("The Magnificent Ambersons," "The Night of the Hunter," "The Three Faces of Eve"), told the film scholar Roger Dale Wallace in 1974. Cortez went on, "The point is, they were working on experimental things for the sake of the betterment of the films . . . and they had the backing of Sam Goldwyn to do that." Without Goldwyn's support, Toland might not have been able to develop as an artist. The bigger studios ruled by committee, but Goldwyn, a Polish immigrant with little education, was different; he dreamed of making "quality" pictures that brought together the most literate and talented writers, directors, and actors he could find, both inside and outside Hollywood.

In the late nineteen-twenties, movies began to talk, and this development brought with it a number of problems—

chief among them the audible whir of the camera. A cumbersome early solution was to place the camera and the audio departments in separate soundproof booths. This limited the camera's movements, however, and made the early talkies little more than static "photo plays." When Goldwyn assigned Barnes to shoot the smoky-voiced Ronald Colman in F. Richard Jones's 1929 adaptation of "Bulldog Drummond," he and Toland devised a tool that silenced the camera's grind, and finally permitted them to move the camera for tracking shots. This was among the first of Toland's many technical innovations: it made moving pictures move.

According to the journalist Sidney Skolsky, Goldwyn first became aware of Toland when a dialogue coach named Laura Hope Crews—best remembered as Aunt Pittypat in "Gone with the Wind"—observed him at work as the second cameraman on the 1929 Gloria Swanson vehicle "The Trespasser." Crews told Goldwyn, "That young man should be a cameraman. He's got the makings of a great one." Toland's first solo credit was for the 1931 musical comedy "Palmy Days," written by and starring Eddie Cantor, with choreography by Busby Berkeley. Soon, he was enough of a figure in Hollywood to be recognized by the press. In the mid-thirties, Dudley Early, writing for *The Family Circle*, offered this description:

> Slight, nervous, volatile, he's a young man you'd never suspect of being a successful broker or hard-headed business man, as indeed he's not. While we were eating lunch, he illustrated his points with expressive movements of his slender, long-fingered hands—the kind of hands you always associate with people who have artistic talent, whether it applies, as a rule, or not. And he spoke with conviction, the kind of assuredness which goes with knowing one's job. Always I had had a rather vague notion of the part which lighting played in the photographing of a star, but it was so clearly defined by Gregg Toland that I think (maybe) I'll become a photographer.

In 1934, Toland, who had already been married and divorced, met Helene Barclay at the Chateau Marmont, on Sunset Boulevard. Barclay was living at the hotel, having herself recently divorced and moved from the East Coast to pursue an acting career. (She played a small part in Busby Berkeley's 1933 film "42nd Street.") In the early days of their romance, Barclay was reprimanded by one of her friends for bringing a mere "technician" to a party of swells, and when the couple married they kept it secret for nearly a year, worried that news of the wedding would have a disastrous effect on her career. Their daughter, Lothian Skelton, the widow of the comedian Red Skelton, told me that Barclay liked to mingle with the Hollywood glitterati—a milieu that held little interest for Toland. Barclay persuaded him to buy a large house in Benedict Canyon, and threw parties that were attended by Fay Wray, John Wayne, and Bette Davis. When the house caught fire, in the early forties, Toland was so immersed in his work at the studio that he asked his assistant to go and rescue his stamp collection for him.

In 1939, Toland earned his first Oscar (he had been nominated twice before), for his work on Wyler's "Wuthering Heights"—"a soft, diffused picture, a fantasy," as he described it, for which he had shifted deftly between the romantic effects of candlelight and the bleak outdoor landscape of the English moors. But Toland was not one to rest on his laurels. The following year, he heard that Orson Welles, who was twenty-five, and already a highly regarded actor and stage and radio director, was planning to make his first feature film. Toland sought the boy wonder out. "I know nothing at all about filmmaking," Welles admitted when they met. "That's why I want to work with you," Toland replied. "That's the only way to learn anything—from somebody who doesn't know anything."

During the filming of "Citizen Kane," the epic story of a self-deluded newspaper titan, Charles Foster Kane (played by Welles), Toland protected the director from any potential embarrassment in front of the crew by conferring with him in private, explaining technical choices or problems as they cropped up. Ralph Hoge, Toland's longtime assistant, recalled, in an interview with Roger Dale Wallace, "One of the great things about Orson . . . was he would stage something and run a rehearsal and then Gregg would explain to him why this was photographically bad, and when Orson once got it into his head what Gregg was talking about he could re-stage it that quick." In an article published in *Popular Photography* in 1941, Toland recalled that "Welles' use of the cinematographer as a real aid to him in telling the story . . . helped me immeasurably. He was willing—and this is very rare in Hollywood—that I take weeks to achieve a desired photographic effect."

Toland's aesthetic contribution to the film was critical. "From the moment the production began to take shape in script form, everything was planned with reference to what the camera could bring to the eyes of the audience," Toland wrote in *American Cinematographer*. "Direct cuts, we felt, were something that should be avoided wherever possible. Instead, we tried to plan action so that the camera could pan or dolly from one angle to another whenever this type of treatment was desirable." Toland explained that he and Welles had felt that "the picture should be brought to the screen in such a way that the audience would feel it was looking at reality, rather than merely at a movie." Instead of hanging lights from the rafters, which would have made it impossible to show the ceilings in a scene, for instance, Toland placed them on the floor, shooting light upward. (The sound engineers saw to it that the ceilings on the set were made of muslin, to hide the recording equipment.)

Beyond the realism of the sets, Welles and Toland aimed for a more metaphysical realism: they wanted the camera to reproduce the way we perceive space—with both foreground and background objects in focus. Toland had some experience with this idea. For the 1926 film "The Bat," Arthur Edeson—Toland's boss at the time—and his art director, William Cameron Menzies, had storyboarded a number of shots with actors both in the foreground and in the background, but, because of constraints imposed on them by the studio, they had been unable to execute the plans.

On "Citizen Kane," Toland had no such limitations. Realizing that, even with the twenty-four-millimetre lenses customarily used for wide-angle effects, the depth of field was very small, he decided to shoot with an aperture as narrow as f/16. (The film available at the time was too slow to capture décor and actors without the use of bright arc lights. For shots that most cameramen would have filmed with a light level of thirty-five foot-candles, Toland used as much as thirteen hundred.) Toland's technique, which changed filmmaking forever, became known as "deep focus." Employed throughout the film, it heightened Welles's brooding examination of power by allowing viewers to see in a single frame all the detritus—human and otherwise—that Kane had collected in his love-starved life. One key scene shows the elderly Kane in his castle, yards away from his opera-singing, bottle-blond wife, Susan (Dorothy Comingore). As she works on a jigsaw puzzle in the foreground, Kane sits in the background of the frame, seemingly bored or oppressed by her plaintive voice, which echoes through the great hall like that of an exhausted toucan. A standard montage might have shown Susan first, then Kane's reaction to her, and then perhaps the hollow fireplace behind them, as the scene faded out. With deep focus, Welles could present all of "reality" in a single shot. The visible distance between Kane and his bride in this scene says as much about the disintegration of their marriage as the dialogue does.

When "Citizen Kane" came out, in 1941, Welles shared his spot on the title card with Toland, as John Ford had done the year before. Welles told the director Peter Bogdanovich, "Up till then, cameramen were listed with about eight other names. Nobody those days—only the stars, the director, and the producer—got separate cards. Gregg deserved it, didn't he?" An editorial in *American Cinematographer* noted, "The arresting visual treatment Toland gave that film has done more than any other single achievement of the last twenty years to make the public conscious of the cinematographer and the creative part he plays."

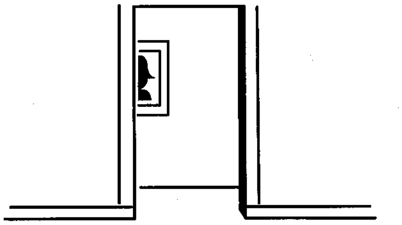
In an essay that Toland wrote for *International Photographer*, he argued that the cinematographer had to disregard whether "the director, producer, or star likes the results of the day's work." He continued, "True, many are not in a sufficiently secure economic position to forget these collaborations, but to those who have a few nickels in the bank let me say: the sooner you adopt the attitude of pleasing yourself as a photographer and of disregarding the multi-opinions of others, the better photographic storytelling you will do." He was even more outspoken when it came to the talent. "The star system has us making pictures with personalities rather than stories, sacrificing everything in order to keep some old bags playing young women," he said.

For all his bravado, however, Toland had a soft touch on the set. According to Alexander Golitzen, an art director who worked with Toland on several movies, he had "a very, very good working relationship" with his subjects. "He was, you might say, 'palsy-walsy' with all the different players," Golitzen said. Ralph Hoge told Wallace how the cinematographer had coaxed a performance out of Ingrid Bergman for David O. Selznick's "Intermezzo":

> Selznick had gone to Europe and gotten Bergman. . . . She had wonderful charm on the screen and he had brought her over to this country under contract and put her in "Intermezzo." They were two weeks into the picture, roughly, and he was going to call the picture off completely because she was so bad. So he called and talked to Gregg and, although we were on another picture then . . . we took the camera and went over to the Selznick studios. . . . We had the assistant set up the camera on a big leather chair that was there on the stage. And Gregg just put up one light and we had a little light that we called "Obe" over the camera. . . . We called it "Obe" because of Merle Oberon; we developed it for her. . . . Gregg went over and sat down on the arm of the overstuffed chair which Bergman was sitting in. . . . He said, "Now dear . . . look, I'd like for you to take off all of that makeup; I'd like to see you without any makeup." . . . And when she got it all off, Gregg told her to put on her street makeup, to wear to a party or whenever she went out. . . . The thing is . . . that she had seen those rushes and she had heard the comment for three weeks on the picture, and she was so uptight trying to make good in this country and with everything going wrong, that Gregg wanted to catch her completely relaxed, looking like her natural self. So this is the way he devised to get her to relax, to get her makeup off . . . and to get her natural charm in . . . without worrying about lines or what the director was thinking.

The next day, Toland returned to Selznick's studio to watch the footage. Selznick (who had wanted Toland to film "Gone with the Wind") came into the projection room and kissed Bergman.

Toland called "Citizen Kane" "the most exciting professional adventure of my career," but the year it was released he shot a more controlled and, in many ways, more accurate portrait of moral rot: Wyler's adaptation of Lillian Hellman's play "The Little Foxes." (Toland's work with Wyler and Hellman on "These Three," "Dead End," and "The Little Foxes" constitutes a kind of trilogy on the American class system. Some critics have said that after Toland's death Wyler's movies assumed a much more conventional look.) For the film, which starred Bette Davis in the role of a tyrannical and scheming Southern belle, Toland used deep focus to even more startling effect. "The Little Foxes" also presented a new technical challenge. "We determined that Bette Davis, the star, should wear a pure white makeup," Toland wrote. "This is revolutionary but it is a potent device in suggesting the kind of character she portrays in the story—a woman waging the eternal conflict with age." In one extraordinary sequence in her chilling depiction of avarice and female sexual repression, Davis sits in front of a mirror, applying her makeup with great skill and efficiency, as if it were war paint. But the real mask she wears—her own face—is fixed; the powder is merely a façade, the sleek finish on a pile of chrome. In order to balance the lighting of Davis's makeup with that of the other actors, Toland conducted extensive makeup tests. "The way he shot it was just genius," Davis said in the documentary "Goldwyn."



Toland used his increasing stature to make a new arrangement with Goldwyn—two hundred thousand dollars over three years. He also, according to Hoge, "had supervision over sets, costumes . . . the whole setup." But, Toland wrote, "more than anything else I wanted to be able to choose at least one of the pictures each year." He was eager to work outside the studio as well, and, in the end, struck a unique deal that allowed him to take on outside work once his annual obligations to Goldwyn had been fulfilled. "A great many of the stories we make aren't very stimulating," he complained to the writer and producer Lester Koenig in 1947. "Sometimes you wonder why they are made at all. . . . When it's been my misfortune to have to photograph one of those run-of-the-mill pictures, I've been pretty unhappy."

The only movie Toland ever directed—with John Ford as co-director—was a documentary about Pearl Harbor, which he made while serving in the Navy during the Second World War. "December 7th: the Movie," which won an Oscar, is marred by a sentimental opening (featuring Walter Huston as Uncle Sam), for which Toland wrote the script. Still, operating his own camera, Toland was able to use "many of the new ideas in photography and presentation that he had been working with as a civilian, but which had never realized their full potential until he was given this assignment," the film editor and director Robert Parrish recalled in a 1949 letter. The battle scenes, some of which were re-created on the back lot at Twentieth Century Fox, look gritty and improvised, albeit elegantly framed.

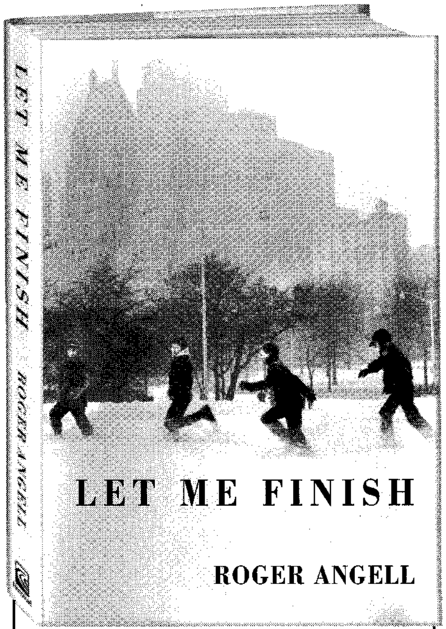
After the war, Toland divorced again, and a few months later he married Virginia Thorpe, a former Goldwyn contract player. They moved to a house on an estate shared with the director Howard Hawks, near where the Getty Center stands today. (In 1936, Toland and Hawks had collaborated on "Come and Get It," and several years later they worked together on "Ball of Fire," which brought deep focus to a comedic setting.) Gregg and Virginia had two sons, Gregg, Jr., and Timothy. But Toland didn't live to see his children grow to maturity. On September 28, 1948, he died in his sleep, of coronary thrombosis.

After Toland's death, Goldwyn received a poignant letter from the cinematographer's father, Frank (Jennie had died of a respiratory illness in 1933): "I wonder if you would tell me something of my son's last illness. I was in Florida when he passed away and did not hear anything of his death until I returned home on Thursday. While it is true his mother and I had been seperated [sic] for more than thirty years yet I always had a contact with Gregg. . . . I would appreciate if you would write me." Goldwyn's secretary responded, "Your son was, to the best of my knowledge, in no pain and no fear of anything happening to him at any time." The secretary continued, "I hope it won't seem gratuitous from a stranger but he was a son to be proud of. . . . I have never known people in this industry to be so profoundly moved. . . . I have never before known Mr. Goldwyn to cry. He said at the time—and to many people—that he had never had an association he valued more highly: he not only respected Gregg but had a deep affection for him, in which there had been no rift during the twenty-two years of their working together."

Toland's legacy was secured by the film theorist André Bazin. Writing about his work with Welles and Wyler in his 1967 study, "What Is Cinema?," Bazin argued that Toland's work had brought democracy to filmmaking. By including all the stuff of life in a single shot—people, rooms, objects—Toland, Bazin suggested, was encouraging us to discover whatever was interesting to *us* in a scene, in the same way that we lock in on a face, or some aspect of the décor, in our real lives.

Although the technology of filmmaking has changed immeasurably since Toland's death, his influence remains pervasive. In Fellini's 1963 masterwork, "8½," the Italian cinematographer Gianni di Venanzo uses black-and-white contrast with the crisp intelligence that was Toland's signature. Sam Raimi's gothic nightmares would be unthinkable without the lights and darks of "Citizen Kane." Soderbergh's claustrophobic filming of the bathroom where a father discovers his young daughter cooking heroin, in the 2000 film "Traffic," is all Toland doors and mirrors; the scene's explosive energy stems as much from a canny use of the architecture as from the actors themselves. These moments of brilliance remain, like Toland, anomalies in the business, but it's the anomalies that stay with us.

"I enjoy being a motion picture cameraman," Toland once wrote. "Of all the people who make up a movie production unit, the cameraman is the only one who can call himself a free soul. He is certainly the least inhibited . . . for the simple reason that while the work of the others is visually obvious at the time it is being performed, the work of the cameraman is not revealed until twenty-four hours later when the film which has passed through his camera is flashed upon the screen in a projection room. While he is actually making a scene, no one can rightfully say, 'I don't like the way you are doing that; suppose we try it this way.' " ♦



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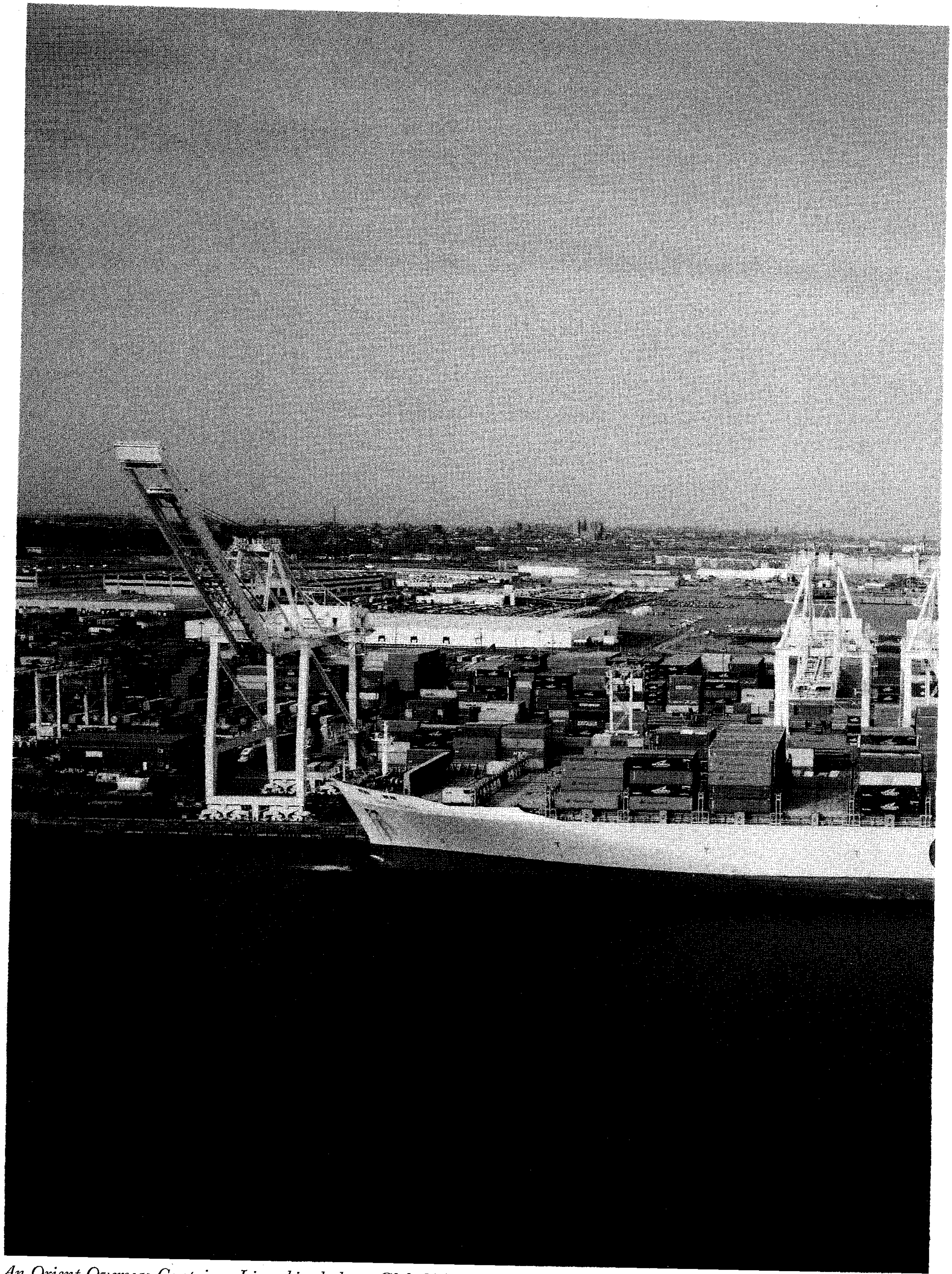


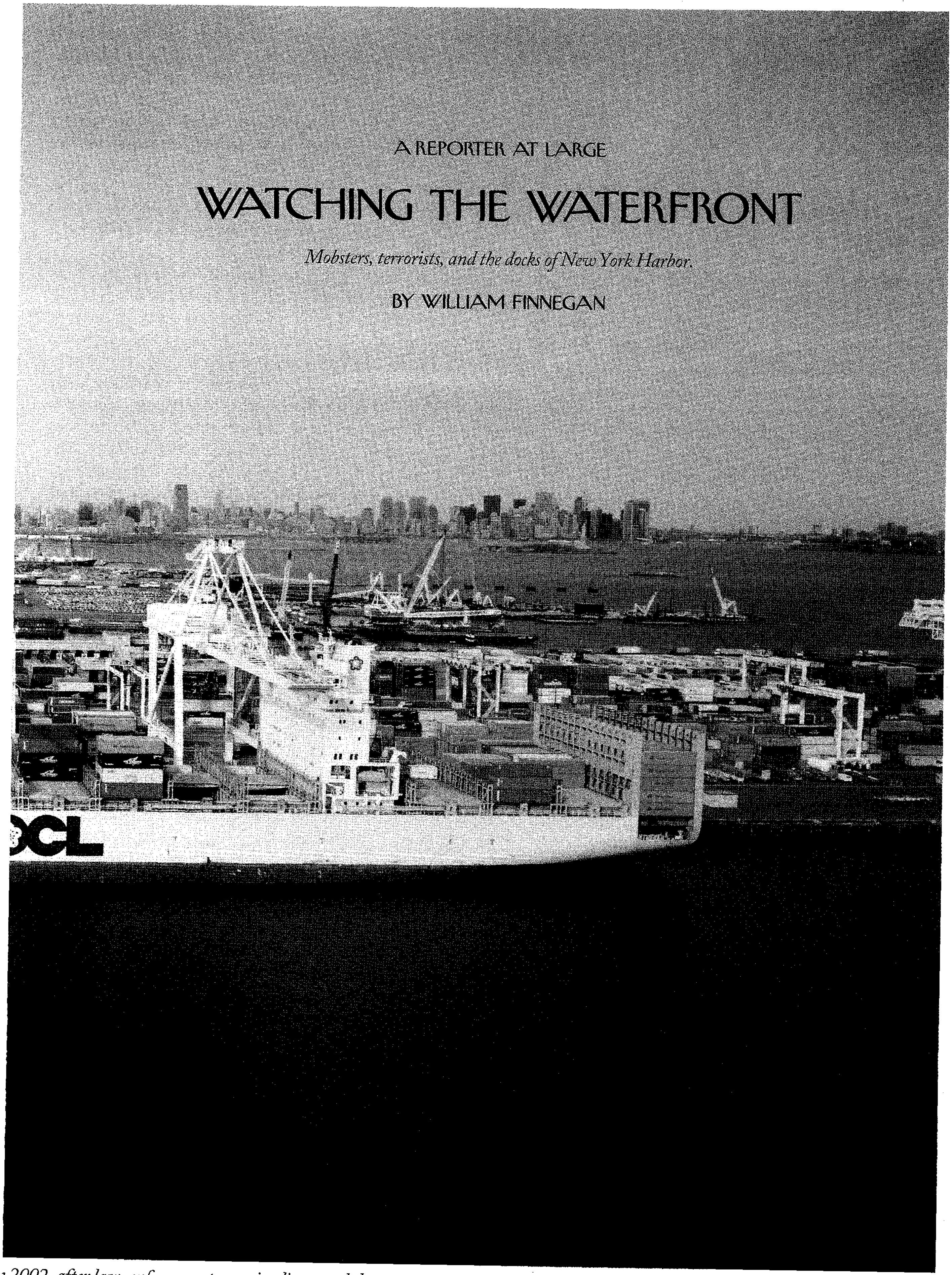
An Orient Overseas Container Line ship docks at Global Terminal, in Bayonne, New Jersey. Global's offices were wiretappe

A REPORTER AT LARGE

WATCHING THE WATERFRONT

Mobsters, terrorists, and the docks of New York Harbor.

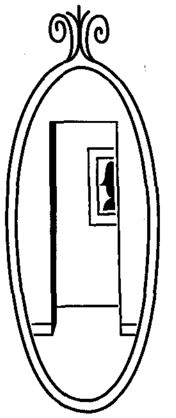
BY WILLIAM FINNEGAN



2002, after law-enforcement agencies discovered that organized-crime plans had been discussed there. Photograph by Robert Polidori.

Global Terminal, in Bayonne, New Jersey, has one clear advantage over most of its competitors for container-ship business in New York Harbor: it's a straight shot from the Narrows, the harbor's entrance. From Global's wharf to Ambrose Seabuoy, out in the Atlantic, where arriving ships meet their pilots, the distance is only fourteen miles. Maurice Byan, the president of Global, told me that ships can save four hours by docking at his pier, which looks across at lower Manhattan, rather than turning west and going through the Kill Van Kull and up into Newark Bay, where the biggest container terminals are, in Port Newark and Elizabeth, or to Howland Hook, on the western shore of Staten Island. Also, ships that dock at Global don't need to pass under the Bayonne Bridge, which is becoming a problem as container ships grow ever larger. Last year, a freighter had to remove its radio towers to make it.

Global, at a hundred acres, is a relatively small terminal, but it's busy. Byan took me on a tour of the pier in his pickup truck, navigating between walls of containers and dodging big, fast-moving equipment—forklifts, bladed stackers, top loaders, and huge rubber-tired gantries, six stories high. "Empty field!" Byan yelled, pointing at some tall piles of multicolored containers, each one eight feet wide by eight feet high and forty feet long, with "CHINA SHIPPING" and "HANJIN" and "P & O NEDLLOYD" painted on the sides. Empty containers are the Port of New York and New Jersey's biggest export, followed by wastepaper and scrap metal. The wastepaper mainly goes to China, and comes back later as paper goods. No empty containers arrive.



Byan, an unassuming sixty-year-old, comes from Baltimore, where his father and grandfather were longshoremen, and where he got his first job, driving a forklift on the piers. "The ships I started on looked like lifeboats compared to these things," he said. He indicated a massive container ship that was being furiously unloaded. He had two new Super Post-Panamax quay cranes coming from China, where they were built. "Panamax" refers to the largest ship that can squeeze through the Panama Canal. Ships that are larger must sail through the Suez Canal on their way from China to New York, a trip that is several thousand miles longer. "We've done a hundred million dollars in upgrades," Byan said. "Twenty-five million more to go. Wait till you see those new cranes."

Many of the ships that dock at the terminal belong to Orient Overseas Container Line, a Chinese corporation, whose parent company owns Global, as well as the Howland Hook terminal. (Most big international port operators have fleets; indeed, one problem with recent calls to end foreign ownership of U.S. ports is that there is no American operator with this capacity.) Orient Overseas is a family-owned firm with close ties to the Chinese government leadership. Its former head, C. H. Tung, left the company to become chief executive of Hong Kong when Beijing took control of the territory. His brother, C. C. Tung, now runs the company.

"Reefers!" Byan said, pointing at a line of boxes. Reefers are refrigerated containers—"produce, wine, shrimp." Longshoremen in bright-orange safety vests went about their jobs. "Average age out here used to be fifty-seven, fifty-eight," Byan said. "We're getting younger people now, though. Longshoremen used to be all big, brawny guys. Now they're more educated, computer-savvy. Fact, these young guys make good crane operators. They grew up on video games."

We drove by a radiation portal, a gateway equipped with a scanner through which all containers leaving the terminal must pass—part of the new federal port-security regime. The portal is overseen by officers of the Customs and Border Protection Agency. Byan said, "Customs bring the VACIS screening vehicle"—Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System, a gamma-ray imaging system—"down here a few days a week and do sonograms on the containers we've been told to isolate."

The trashed, teemingly industrialized landscape around the major container terminals in Elizabeth and Port Newark is perhaps the most critical couple of miles in the entire American transportation system. It includes the New Jersey Turnpike, Newark airport, and so many gas and oil and chemical storage tanks that it is known as the Chemical Coast, all within easy striking distance of the piers. And then, of course, there's Manhattan. National-security analysts estimate that if a terrorist attack closed New York Harbor in winter New England and upstate New York would run out of heating fuel within ten days. Even temporarily hampering the port's operations would have immeasurable cascading effects.

Given the importance of New York Harbor, it seems odd that so much of it is still in the grip of organized crime. For generations, the Genovese family has controlled the New Jersey waterfront, and the Gambinos have had the New York side. The federal government is trying to assume control of the International Longshoremen's Association, describing the union, in a RICO suit filed last July, as "a vehicle for organized crime." Many of the union's top leaders, the government alleges, are Mob associates. In Bayonne, the I.L.A. local has been under federal trusteeship since 2003, a drastic step taken after a long series of corruption scandals. Global Terminal's offices were wiretapped in 2002, after law-enforcement agencies discovered that mobsters were discussing plans there. But over the years ambitious prosecutors, determined federal agencies, and courageous labor reformers have all made serious attempts to expel the Mob from New York Harbor, to little lasting effect. An argument can be made that it simply can't be done.

Part of the popular image of mafiosi is that they are sentimental patriots, who would never help terrorists. Another view is that a port that criminals can penetrate at will can never be called secure. Organized crime has even been described as a "fifth column," ready to aid the terrorist enemy.

Law enforcement is oriented toward catching criminals. In the case of smugglers, that means watching the shadows, the alleys and the byways that they use to move illicit cargo. Terrorists, too, are often trying to move illicit cargo, but there is a fundamental difference between organized crime and groups like Al Qaeda. Both may be ruthless and sociopathic, but the Mob is essentially conservative. Organized crime is, at bottom, a business model, meant to self-perpetuate. But what if a group plans to break the law only once, because its members are on a suicide mission? This is the apocalyptic mentality that anti-terror strategists need to comprehend.

In this context, the shipping container itself has become a major security concern—the poor man's I.C.B.M., as it is sometimes known. More than eleven million of these big steel boxes arrive on American shores each year. The government's post-September 11th security regime has created an expedited class of "trusted shippers"—that is, companies whose containers go through a "green lane," where very few of them are stopped and inspected. It is not an easy lane to penetrate. But this is where what Customs officers call internal conspiracies may be useful to terrorist planning—accomplices in a steamship line, a terminal operator, a freight-forwarding company, a government agency, a shipper, a warehouse, or simply on the docks. Such inside operators, not all of them traditional mafiosi, may or may not know what they are expediting. As J. Kevin McGowan, the assistant police chief of the Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor, told me, "If somebody could be bought, maybe they wouldn't even care what was inside a container."

"Well, some of us mortals have to get up tomorrow morning."

If Americans today have a collective image of the old piers of New York Harbor, it's no doubt drawn from "On the Waterfront," the 1954 film with Marlon Brando as the dockworker Terry Malloy, which was based on Malcolm Johnson's Pulitzer Prize-winning articles for the New York *Sun*. The movie's depiction of longshoring under a mobbed-up union was so compelling that its scenes and characters have become part of the consciousness of the actual waterfront's protagonists today—much as mobsters and their wannabes are said to watch "The Godfather," "The Sopranos," and "Goodfellas" for inspiration, education, and style tips. The Waterfront Commission was created by New York and New Jersey in 1953, in the wake of Johnson's articles, to chase the Mob off the docks. When I asked McGowan why one recent investigation had been code-named Operation Brando, he looked at me as if I were stupid. "After Marlon," he said.

McGowan, who is red-faced and white-haired, was wearing a sharp gray suit that day. We went to lunch at an Italian deli near his office, on the Brooklyn waterfront. He said, "This is a Gambino place, so we should maybe get our food to go. The former owner, we got him on conspiracy to distribute cocaine. He's doing twenty." As we approached the deli, an extremely large man in a brown velour tracksuit came out and passed us without looking our way. "That's the new owner," McGowan said. Inside, McGowan told the counterman, "I'm doing the chicken parm." The counterman asked me, "What did he say? Did he say he was retiring?" McGowan patiently repeated his order, and the counterman said to me, "He thinks he's saving the world." Nobody smiled.

The sociologist Daniel Bell, writing in 1960 about New York Harbor's rackets, noted that "the International Longshoremen's Association has been less a trade union than a collection of Chinese warlords, each ruling a great or small province." The longshoremen in Bayonne belong to Local 1588. Founded in 1938, Local 1588 has been a midsize province, but it has been ruled by some notable warlords. In the mid-seventies, a Genovese soldier named John DiGilio shot his way into control of the local and set up shop in an apartment directly above 1588's storefront offices in Bayonne. Once, when an official of the local did something without his approval, DiGilio stormed downstairs and beat him. Eventually, DiGilio's body turned up in a bag in the Hackensack River. "He had displeased Gigante," a former federal prosecutor told me, referring to the Genovese boss Vincent (the Chin) Gigante.

The Waterfront Commission carries out investigations in coöperation with federal and local police agencies. It also regulates labor in the port, an aspect of its mandate that aids in fighting the Mob. By statute, the commission must license every worker involved in the movement of waterborne freight within a twenty-five-mile radius of the Statue of Liberty, and can deny a license, or "pass," to anyone revealed, through background checks, to have a serious criminal record. New York Harbor is the only port in the country with such a body, but, after fifty-three years of this special oversight, it is also the only port in America with a substantial Mob problem (with the partial exception of Miami, to which a number of mobsters have relocated). The commission's reason for being might, therefore, be questioned. The recent flurry of interest in port security has thus been welcome at the Waterfront Commission's headquarters, on lower Broadway, and the commission has been pushing legislation that would expand its authority from looking for mobsters to looking for terrorists.

The rapid increase in global trade has put a different sort of pressure on the commission, however. World shipping is booming, and the Port of New York and New Jersey, after an era of postwar decline, has been booming along with it. In 2005, the cargo moving through the port was worth a hundred and thirty-two billion dollars—a record sum. The boom has brought with it a labor shortage. There are roughly five thousand licensed longshoremen in the port, and the New York Shipping Association—an employers' group whose members include steamship lines and terminal operators—is anxious to increase that number.

An organization that has had only limited success against local racketeers is perhaps not the best-qualified agency to foil Al Qaeda. But the federal government has hardly inspired confidence with its port-security initiatives. In 2003, the Department of Homeland Security vowed to introduce tamper-resistant identification cards for all transportation workers, but it has already missed several deadlines for doing so. Other high-tech security proposals, such as "smart boxes"—containers fitted with sensors that will track their location, temperature, and radiation and carbon-monoxide levels—are all good in theory but remain very far from implementation. In the real world, port security relies, in large measure, on local knowledge. Often it comes down to particular bits of fence, back doors, unlocked gates, to shady importers, abandoned docks and warehouses—places and people known only to local cops, wharf rats, waterside businesses, and longshoremen.

In 1995, two containers of perfume disappeared from the Global pier. The cargo was worth two million dollars, "and that raised some red flags for us," McGowan said. He sent an undercover officer to a bar in Bayonne where some possible suspects hung out. That led him to Nicholas Romano, the shop steward at Global. Romano was the son-in-law of Nicholas Furina, a Genovese associate who was then running the waterfront in Bayonne for Vincent Gigante. (Furina was also a hiring agent for P. & O., the British company that was recently sold to Dubai Ports World.) It turned out that Romano had taken the perfume, with the help of a Global manager whom investigators then flipped. By mid-2005, the entire Furina crew had been convicted of theft, racketeering, bribery, or extortion.

When the federal trusteeship was imposed, 1588's leadership was dismissed (and, in many cases, prosecuted). Corrupt union officials are not, however, the only cause of mobbed-up docks. "You'd think the employers would welcome us. Not so," Robert McGuire, a former New York police commissioner who was appointed to supervise 1588, said. "Their view of us is 'McGuire will be gone. Then we'll be back to dealing with the street.' "

Last year, 1588 held closely monitored elections for shop steward. The new shop steward at Global is Tom Hanley, a crane operator. I asked McGowan, who seemed to know everyone in the Port of New York and New Jersey, if he knew Hanley. He said he didn't. "Must be one of the good guys," he said.

I visited Tom Hanley at his fourth-floor walkup in Bayonne. We sat at his kitchen table, where he was making a roast-beef sandwich, preparing to go to work. Hanley is sixty-six years old, tall and powerfully built. He's been working as a longshoreman for forty-nine years, thirty-three of them at Global. When he was born, he told me, his family lived on Charles Street, in Greenwich Village. His father was a longshoreman on the West Side docks. One day, when Tom was four months old, his father went to work and never returned. Hanley was later told that his father had been killed

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BURNING THE BRUSH PILE

I shoved into the bottom of the brush
pile two large grocery bags holding
chainsaw chaff well-soaked
in old gasoline gone sticky—a kind
of homemade napalm, except, of course,
without victims, other than boughs,
stumps, broken boards, vines, crambles.

Bracing my knees against the next-
to-the-top roundel of the twelve-foot
apple-picker stepladder
I poured diesel all gurgling
and hiccupping into the center of the pile,
then climbed down and sloshed
the perimeter with kerosene and sludge.

Stepping back, I touched a match
to the oil rag knotted to the thick end
of a thick stick and hurled it, javelin
style, into the core of the pile,
which gasped, then illuminated:
red sunset seen through winter trees.
A small flame came curling out from either
side of the pile and quietly wavered there,
as if this were simply the way matter burns.
Suddenly the great loaded shinicle roared
into flames that leapt up sixty, seventy feet,
swarming through the hole they had heated
open in the chill air to be their chimney.

At noon I came back with a pitchfork
and flicked into the snapping flames
a lot of charred boughs, twig ends burnt off,
that lay around the edges of the fire

as if some elephantine porcupine had been
bludgeoned on its snout, on this spot,
and then, rotting away, had left a rough circle
of black quills pointing to where it had been.

In the evening, when the fire had faded,
I was raking black clarts out of the smoking dirt,
and a tine of my rake snagged on a large lump.
I jerked, shook, beat it apart, and out fell
a small blackened snake, the rear half
burnt away, the forepart alive. When
I took up this poor Isaac, it flashed its tongue,
then struck my hand a few times; I let it.

Already its tail was sealing itself off,
fusing shut the way we cauterize unravelling
nylon line by using its own hot oozings
as glue. I lowered it into the cool grass,
where it waggled but didn't get very far.
Gone the swift lateral undulation, the whip-tail,
the grip that snakes bring into the world.

It stopped where the grass grew thick
and flashed its tongue again, as if trying
to spit or spirit away its pain,
as we do, with our growled profanities,
or as if uttering a curse, or—wildest fantasy—
a benediction. Most likely it was trying to find
its whereabouts, and perhaps get one last take
on this unknown being also reeking of fire.
Then the snake zipped in its tongue
and hirpled away into the secrecy of the grass.

—*Galway Kinnell*

for disrespecting two gangsters who ran the West Side piers. The Hanleys moved across the river to Hoboken, and Tom grew up rough on the docks.

"Hoboken was like the Barbary Coast," Hanley said, and then laughed. "Whatever the Barbary Coast was like."

He quit school after the ninth grade. "Economic necessity," he said. His older brother was already a longshoreman, and he got Tom a job. "He was hooked up with the Murphy brothers, who were in power in Hoboken at the time," Hanley said. "They killed two or three people to take over that local. When I told my mother I was gonna get my pass"—from the Waterfront Commission—"she said, 'No, you know what happened to your father.' So I said, 'Ma, it's either the waterfront or the Railway Express.' I used to steal some cargo with some guys from the Railway Express. So she chose the waterfront."

When Hanley started, the cargo that longshoremen handled was "breakbulk"—loose, in bags and crates and barrels, on pallets. The signature tool of the dockworker was a short, wooden-handled steel baling hook. "It was heavy, hard work," Hanley said. "And I was only a hundred sixty-five pounds then. All day, breaking your balls. But I had more staying power than I thought." Then, starting in the late sixties, came containerization—the advent of the standard intermodal cargo container, which can be transferred from a ship straight onto a truck or a railcar. The majority of the port's dockwork, once concentrated on the West Side of Manhattan, moved to New Jersey: the old Manhattan finger piers, on their wooden pilings, weren't strong enough to handle big gantry cranes, or able to provide the big yards, or "backspace," for eighteen-wheelers to queue up and turn around. Dockwork quickly grew more automated; longshoremen became heavy-equipment operators. Fewer men were needed, and the pay improved.

"I had a friend who was a bad killer," Hanley told me. We had moved to his living room; Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers were playing on the stereo. "When I left Hoboken, and came to Global, he always used to say, 'Tommy, any jobs you want done over there?' And I'd always say, 'No, I'm driving a crane, I'm making money.' If I'd said yes, it would've been done. But then I would've owed him something," Hanley said. "I could have had a lot of different jobs from wiseguys." He meant desirable positions on the piers. "But, once you take one of those, you owe them. And then it never stops."

As a kid, Hanley had a role in "On the Waterfront." He played Tommy, the boy who looks after Terry Malloy's beloved pigeons in their rooftop coop in Hoboken, and then, devastated by the news that Malloy has begun coöperating with a crime commission, kills the birds.

"They were building pigeon coops on the roof of my tenement, so the movie company hired me, kind of like you hire a kid to watch your car when you're in Harlem. I guess they thought I was going to burn the coops down or something," he said. "Anyway, I was feeding the pigeons, and I got sent to the Actors Studio, on West Fifty-seventh Street, where Elia Kazan and Budd Schulberg were doing auditions." Kazan was the film's director, and Schulberg was the screenwriter. "They deliberately enraged me," Hanley said. "They said, 'We heard your father was a squealer.' So I went nuts, started throwing chairs at them, and that's what they wanted, because there's that scene where I throw a pigeon at Brando. At the time, I didn't really know who Brando was. But the girls in my neighborhood knew who he was."

The movie company offered Hanley two hundred and fifty dollars a week. "That was like half a million dollars to us," he said. "My mom and I were starving. We were eight months behind on our rent, which was fourteen dollars a month. It lasted only two weeks, but still." The work itself was easy. "Elia Kazan walked me through it. He just kept saying, 'You can do it.' I'd never had attention like that before." He paused. "I was on TV once after that, on 'The Red Buttons Show,'" he said. Then, with impeccable timing, he added, "I pursued my acting career on the waterfront, where I pretended to be a tough guy."

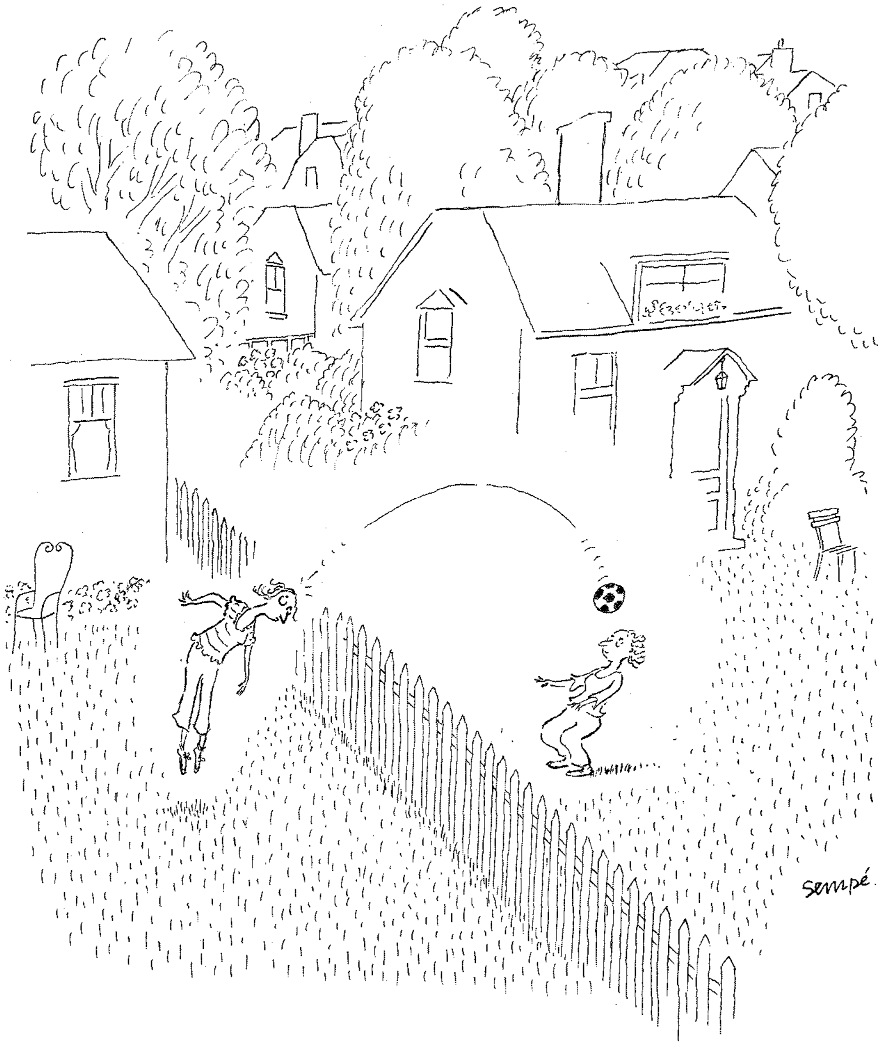
Hanley is divorced and lives alone. He has three children, who are all grown. There were framed photographs of them on the bookshelves. He took one down. "My baby. She's in law school, in Florida," he said.

"I know a lot of mobsters my age," Hanley went on. "And they're going to prison now. Loan sharks, bookies. What was their life? Sitting around the social club all their lives, drinking all day. That's a suck life."

When Hanley ran for shop steward of 1588, it was the first election for that post in his forty-nine years on the docks. There is a reform movement within the I.L.A., but it is strongest down South, where the union's leadership has a looser grip—the union is based in New York—and the membership is mostly African-American. The movement has had trouble gaining a foothold in New York Harbor; Hanley, for instance, has kept his distance. The co-chairmen of the reform coalition are Leonard Riley, a longshoreman in Charleston, South Carolina, and Tony Perlstein, a longshoreman at Global, who has worked as a labor organizer in other industries, and is a graduate of Brown University. (Perlstein says that he has been threatened, both subtly and otherwise. After one union-local meeting in New Jersey, he was confronted by a group of workers aligned with the Old Guard. "Hey, Tone, you think we're stupid?" one of them asked. He put a finger in Perlstein's face and bellowed, "I *Googled* you!")

"Some of the old guys around here think Perlstein's a Communist," Hanley told me. "I couldn't care less. But they don't like some young guy telling them how things should be. They want us to be more like the West Coast." The longshoremen on the West Coast broke away from the I.L.A. in the thirties, forming their own, more militant, Mob-free union. "The West Coast, it's true they run a much tighter ship, I think. But even there I doubt it's totally legit. Is anything ever totally legit?"

For the moment, he said, with the federal monitors around, the wiseguys in Bayonne were lying low. In the past few years alone, Local 1588 officials—shop stewards, pier foremen, two secretary-treasurers, three presidents—have been convicted of, among other crimes, racketeering, extortion, bribery, conspiracy, embezzlement, and grand theft. Their sons, nephews, cousins, friends, wives, and girlfriends are still working in Bayonne, however. Hanley laughed. "They're all still pecking at the door." It was nine o'clock in the evening, in mid-December, and he had to go to work. It was going to be a cold night on the pier.



If there is any one person in charge of the Port of New York and New Jersey, it is Glenn Wiltshire, United States Coast Guard, the Captain of the Port. From his command center, at Fort Wadsworth, on Staten Island, he surveys the waterside for problems, emergencies, threats. His jurisdiction includes the Hudson River up to Lake Champlain, the East River out to Hempstead Harbor, all of New York Harbor, and a big wedge of the Atlantic Ocean extending out two hundred miles. Before September 11th, the terrorism-prevention aspect of maritime security accounted for two per cent of Coast Guard activity. Today, it's twenty-five per cent. Captain Wiltshire, whose manner is supremely matter-of-fact, told me, "We have to get ready for a low-probability, high-consequence event." His people look hard at every vessel that approaches New York Harbor—fishing boats, yachts, and, of course, the more than fifty-three hundred foreign-flagged commercial ships that dock here each year.

"For certain vessels, we'll put a boarding team aboard and, beyond the security exam, we'll leave a team on board to watch the control spaces as the ship is coming in," he said. The Coast Guard calls these "ships of concern." "We want to make sure that nothing untoward is coming. There are three main possibilities. One, the ship is carrying the weapon. Two, the ship is the weapon. Three, the ship is carrying the people who intend an attack."

I asked how a ship might be a weapon.

"It could be a loaded oil tanker, intended to be used as a bomb, or to take down a bridge. Or maybe a bad guy plans to sink a ship in the middle of Kill Van Kull. That would stop about eighty per cent of our container traffic," Captain Wiltshire said. "We're also on the lookout for a U.S.S. Cole-type attack." He was referring to the Al Qaeda attack, in 2000, in Yemen, by a bomb-filled dinghy against a Navy destroyer, which killed seventeen American sailors.

The Coast Guard has been boarding vessels without search warrants since 1790. Until recently, however, the Guardsmen normally did so unarmed. In New York Harbor, there are long-established security zones around such sites as the United Nations during the General Assembly. Since September 11th, new zones—the Statue of Liberty, the Indian Point nuclear power plant—have been added, and their enforcement tightened. But some laws and port regulations have become outdated in the new security era, Captain Wiltshire told me. Vessels are still allowed, for instance, to stay in anchorages for thirty days; a tanker full of crude oil might be left to sit out a price fluctuation before it docks. "We're going to reduce that," he said.

The tension between security and commerce is inescapable. Last month, the *Times* reported that some Coast Guard commanders, heeding complaints from big shippers about costly delays, have been warning some ships about what are supposed to be random inspections. According to the *Times*, this practice (which seems to be common in Los Angeles and Long Beach, though not, apparently, in the Port of New York and New Jersey) was condoned by the Coast Guard's top command in Washington.

The main emphasis of post-9/11 American maritime-security strategy is to push the borders out as far as they can go—across the oceans, if possible. Indeed, wherever there is a plausible suspicion that a ship carries a weapon of mass destruction, or its components, the U.S. and a number of its allies now reserve the right to board, inspect, and interdict, beyond their territorial waters, under a 2003 compact known as the Proliferation Security Initiative. This initiative has been used primarily against vessels travelling to and from North Korea, but it is also aimed at terrorist organizations.

There are a hundred and twenty thousand merchant ships at work today. American intelligence agencies have estimated that Al Qaeda owns or controls as many as fifty. The explosives used to destroy the U.S. embassies in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in 1998, were delivered to East Africa on an Al Qaeda ship. But it is impossible to trace ship ownership and registration with much accuracy. As a U.S. official told the Washington *Post*, "You can't swing a dead cat in the shipping business without hitting somebody with phony papers." There are more than a million seafarers at work, and most come from poor countries—Indonesia, China, the Philippines. The opportunities for terrorist operatives to move by sea under false identities are effectively endless. The most glaring vulnerability in maritime security, however, is the container.

In 1955, a North Carolina trucking-company owner named Malcom McLean invented the modern cargo container. Today, ninety per cent of world shipping moves by container. (McLean's company, Sea-Land, was sold to a Danish company, Maersk, in 1999.) Since 2002, a program known as the Container Security Initiative requires our main trading partners to send to U.S. Customs and Border Protection an electronic manifest for every U.S.-bound container twenty-four hours before it is loaded on a ship. Customs, if it notices anything alarming, may ask the foreign port to inspect the container's contents, or refuse it. This program covers almost eighty per cent of all U.S.-bound ocean-borne cargo. There is also a voluntary, public-private initiative, established in late 2001, called the Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism, or C.-T.PAT, in which companies agree to have their security procedures vetted by U.S. authorities, in exchange for expedited handling of their business—the green lane. More than six thousand firms have been accepted into C.-T.PAT, including all the big American importers. Forty-five per cent of U.S. imports now pass through the green lane.

These systems are far from foolproof. The information on cargo manifests is routinely vague, incomplete, or wrong, and foreign ports are generally expected to purchase their own radiation-detection systems, which are expensive. Spot checks by American officials at a number of ports have not been reassuring. A Department of Homeland Security study leaked in March found opportunities, all along the cargo corridor—in American and foreign ports—"that would enable unmanifested material or weapons of mass destruction to be introduced into the supply chain."

In September, 2003, an investigative team at ABC News shipped fifteen pounds of depleted uranium from Jakarta to Los Angeles in a container full of furniture. Customs agents in Los Angeles targeted the container for screening—something that happens to less than seven per cent of all arriving containers. The container passed, and entered the country unopened. Depleted uranium is relatively harmless, and legal to import, but it gives off a radiation signature very similar to that of the highly enriched uranium used for nuclear weapons. "If they can't detect that, then they can't detect the real thing," a nuclear physicist told journalists.

I spent one morning this winter watching customs agents work the radiation portals on trucks leaving Maher Terminal, in Elizabeth. All container terminals in New York–New Jersey have radiation portals. (Nationally, the coverage is fifty-seven per cent.) There were a lot of radiation hits—as many as two hundred a day, the agents said. Tiles, pottery, even kitty litter emit a low-level radiation that sets off the alarm. The agents come out of their toll booth, check the manifest, and run handheld isotope-identification devices around the containers. If anything seems unresolved, they send the vehicle over to the VACIS machine. At the VACIS—basically, a giant outdoor CAT scan for trucks—more agents study an X-ray-like image of the container's contents. They look at the metal strip seal on the container's door, and make sure it's intact. They don't open the doors. If there's anything they don't like, they can send the container for physical inspection, but that happens less than two per cent of the time.

One VACIS operator said, "These

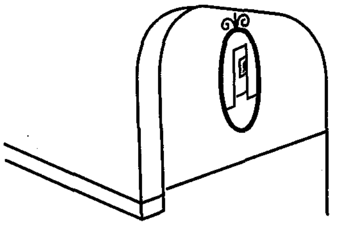
truckers, we don't know who they are. They might pop a container in the yard, take something out. That's why we check the seals. But you've got to check the hardware, too. The seal can be intact, but the container can be tampered with. They can take off the door." Another operator pointed to the image on his monitor. "Coffee grounds," he said. "You can't see through coffee grounds." With certain adjustments, VACIS can in fact see through coffee grounds, but he let the container go.

I talked to Bill Brush, who at the time was the assistant port director at Customs and Border Protection, in Port Newark. He described the "targeting algorithm" that a National Targeting Center in Virginia has developed for container security. "It has three thousand rules for evaluating data," he said. "If somebody wants to try something, he has to be very careful there's no historical anomaly. We have more than twenty years of entry data. We know how much a hundred bales of cotton should weigh. Our targeting will tell us if this is the eight thousandth time we've seen this commodity from this importer from this port—but this time there's something different about it. Each rule in targeting has a derogatory weight to it. So, if this is an unusual commodity to be coming from this country—paint from Syria, say—then that's points. Points pile up to trigger an exam. Before 9/11, local officers made the call on cargo inspection. Now everything goes through the automated target system."

Some experts believe that reliance on the targeting algorithm may be a problem. In 2004, Homeland Security's inspector-general, Clark Kent Ervin, found more contraband in containers that had been selected randomly than Customs found in those it had segregated. Stephen Flynn, a former Coast Guard commander who is now a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, explained the odd results this way: "The targeting algorithm is very well known in the trade. People in business work hard to make sure Customs doesn't pull out their box. And drug traffickers figure it out, too." What's being lost in the automated system, Flynn says, is the "dock smarts" of experienced officers.

Bill Brush, for example, can talk in passionate detail about seventy ways to manipulate container seals, or how to tell a false interior wall at a glance. "The first thing you look for as you walk into a container is the upper corners," he said. "Can you see the lift points? A four-inch false wall can hide a lot of stuff—including W.M.D. We can't forget the lessons we learned from narcotics interdiction." He mentioned stowaways. "We used to see them escorting narcotics, but they're even more of a worry now," he said. "You find two stowaways in a rudder compartment, you've got to assume they may be guarding something." Brush went on, "We're looking for small indicators—maybe small amounts, too. But you've got to use your imagination." Still, with seven thousand electronic bills of lading being filed daily for the Port of New York and New Jersey alone, Brush's small staff would be swamped without its targeting algorithm. The volume of lading bills is one reason that politicians who call for vastly heavier port security tend to infuriate the experts. Shmuel Yahalom, a transportation economist at SUNY Maritime, in the Bronx, said, referring to the New York senator, "Charles Schumer was pushing for one hundred per cent container inspection? That would kill the port!"

Shortly after September 11th, there was an incident in Italy that suggested that Al Qaeda was thinking imaginatively about containers. Workers in the port of Gioa Tauro heard noises coming from inside a container. They found a forty-three-year-old Egyptian stowaway. He was well dressed, with a bed, plenty of food and water, and a makeshift toilet. More than that, according to "A Time Bomb for Global Trade," by the journalist Michael Richardson, he was carrying "a satellite phone, a laptop computer, several cameras, batteries, and . . . airport security passes and an airline mechanic's certificate valid for four major American airports." The container had been loaded in Port Said, Egypt, and was bound for Canada. The Italian police, who believed that the stowaway was an Al Qaeda operative, arrested him, but he was released on bail and disappeared.



The Garment District Plot, as the New York City Police Department calls it, may represent the essence of the container threat. In early 2003, Uzair Paracha, a twenty-three-year-old Pakistani, met with three men in Karachi who said that they wanted to invest in his family's firm, International Merchandise Group, which exported clothes to the United States. Paracha had grown up partly in New York City, and had a green card. His father, Saifullah Paracha, had introduced him to the "investors": Majid Khan, Ammar al-Baluchi, and Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, the mastermind of the September 11th terror attacks. Uzair Paracha was interested not in jihad but in the two hundred thousand dollars that the Al Qaeda men said they would initially invest. In return, Uzair agreed to help Majid Khan—who had previously lived in the United States—return to America. Khan handed over his driver's license, Social Security card, a bank card, and credit cards, and Uzair took them with him to New York.

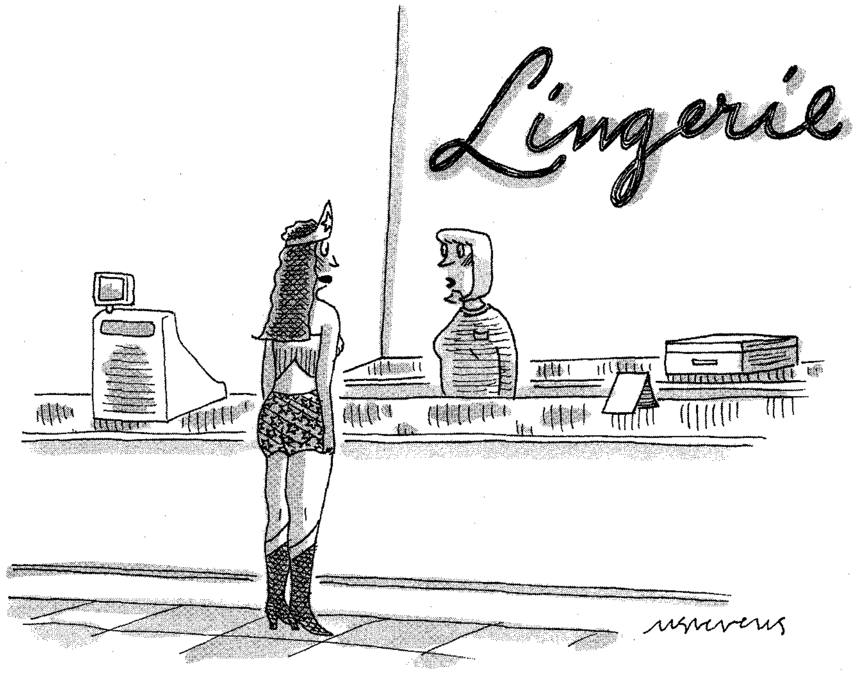
While Uzair Paracha went about establishing a fictitious presence for Majid Khan in the United States—making purchases with Khan's credit cards and calls in his name to the immigration service—Khalid Sheikh Mohammed was arrested in Pakistan. He quickly gave up a lode of information to American interrogators, including the names of the Parachas. Uzair Paracha was arrested in his father's office in the garment district in March, 2003. In his briefcase, agents found Khan's identification. Uzair was convicted of conspiring to help an Al Qaeda operative enter the country and carry out an attack; he will be sentenced next week. Khan and Baluchi were arrested in Pakistan and are believed to be in secret American custody. Saifullah Paracha is being held at Guantánamo Bay.

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed reportedly also talked to interrogators about his interest in the Parachas' business as a way to smuggle explosives into the United States in shipping containers. Kmart was a customer of the Parachas. And Kmart is, of course, a denizen of the green lane into the U.S.

The largest American importer by far

is Wal-Mart. Last year, it brought seven hundred thousand container units through the green lane into the country. The rise of the big-box retailers, with their global network of suppliers, has caused a shift in power in the international shipping business away from the steamship lines and terminal operators, and toward the importers. What is more, companies like Wal-Mart have been actively working against stronger port- and container-security laws since shortly after the September 11th terror attacks. The Retail Industry Leaders Association, a Washington lobby dominated by Wal-Mart, actually boasted, in a 2005 report to its members, about its "continued industry leadership in opposition to ill-advised and onerous port security measures (i.e. cargo fees, increased physical inspections)."

The container-ship revolution has effectively abolished distance as a pricing factor. For a pair of shoes made in China and sold in this country for fifty dollars, only about seventy-five cents of the retail cost derives from transportation. And the main costs in international shipping come from friction in the pipeline, particularly at the points of ship loading and unloading. The costs exacted by fraud and other crimes—the "Mob tax"—are small compared with the costs of ordinary, honest labor. It is, therefore, the latter costs—unionized labor, essentially—that concern global shipping interests, rather than the costs associated with reducing crime or with the industry's potential contribution to terrorism.



"I'm not sure we still carry the Wonderbra."

Containers represent an opportunity for mobsters as well as for terrorists; in the last few decades, containerization has transformed the traditional waterfront rackets. Pilferage, for instance, became more difficult with less loose cargo and more big sealed boxes crossing the docks. Mob-connected firms began operating garages to provide container and truck-chassis maintenance, and union health contracts started going to mobbed-up clinics and pharmacies.

The Mafia still makes money from no-show jobs and shakedowns of shipping lines and terminal operators in exchange for "labor peace." The job of shop steward at Global Terminal, for example, had long been, as one longshoreman told me, "a Mob job. Look at the pay." The pay is a hundred and sixty thousand dollars a year. Nobody thought that Tom Hanley wanted the job for the money, though. He made a hundred and fifty-seven thousand dollars last year as a crane operator. That's high for an East Coast longshoreman—nearly twice the average—but not for a man of his seniority and experience operating a crane.

When he started longshoring, Hanley made two dollars and thirty-five cents an hour. In the nineteen-seventies, his pay rose to twenty thousand a year, and he was astounded, he said. "I sure never thought I'd make a hundred thousand bucks a year on the docks, not in this life." It bothers him when people are surprised by what he earns. "A lot of people don't think we should be making this kind of money," he said. "We're peons, we're working stiffs."

Aside from longshoring, few of the jobs around the docks are unionized. Most containers leave and arrive at marine terminals on trucks. Some are long-haul interstate trucks, but most are local drayage—quick turns to nearby warehouses and distribution centers—and, since the deregulation of trucking, in the nineteen-eighties, the great majority of drivers are not Teamsters but "owner-operators," which is to say non-union, with no safety training, professional licensing, or benefits. As a result, port trucking is a badly paid, precarious line of work, pursued only by the economically desperate. Most of the truckers at the major ports are Latino immigrants, and a good percentage of them are undocumented. (Bill Brush, of Customs and Border Protection, told me, "If you were to make a firm policy that, say, Los Angeles and Long Beach had to check the immigration bona fides of every trucker, you'd have a major trucker shortage. You'd have a trade breakdown.") In May, ninety per cent of the drivers at the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach took part in the nationwide work boycott in support of immigrants' rights.

Port trucking is also a port-security problem. The Department of Homeland Security recently conducted a study of nine thousand truckers who work in the Port of New York and New Jersey. All had been issued identification cards that gave them access to the entire port. According to a draft of the study obtained by the Associated Press, nearly half of the drivers had criminal records, and about five hundred were carrying phony drivers' licenses.

Most officials who work around the docks reject the idea that mobsters would willingly allow jihadists to move a load across a pier. It's striking how often movies and television are mentioned when this is the question. Would Tony Soprano let some Arabs come in and blow up New York? *No way.* Didn't you see the episode where he got so mad about Al Qaeda that he threw a cash register at an innocent bartender? Bill Brush mentioned an Arnold Schwarzenegger movie, "Eraser." I hadn't seen it. "Well, this pier Mob only handles American crime," he said. In another, perhaps more realistic—and certainly more sombre—moment, Brush said, "If someone is going to offer one of these groups enough money, I'm not sure if they're going to ask questions."

The American public was clearly disturbed to learn, earlier this year, that our ports are run largely by foreign corporations. But terminal operators tend to be owned by companies with steamship lines—the shipping business is highly vertically integrated—and the last major American line, American President, was sold to a Singapore conglomerate in 1997. American-flagged service in the North Atlantic actually ended in 1969. When the Administration of George H. W. Bush went looking for American firms to handle some of its stevedoring and shipping in the first Gulf War, it found virtually none with the needed capacity. Today, a Singapore company handles a large amount of U.S. government work in the Middle East. The largest American terminal operator is S.S.A. Marine, in Seattle, a family-owned company; with no ships or containers, or even a logistics business, it is hardly in the global big leagues. It's fair to say that, if foreign-owned terminal operators were barred from American ports, many terminals would cease functioning.

The main reason for America's absence from the field is that international shipping is a high-risk, capital-intensive business that periodically requires extensive state assistance, and neither Wall Street nor Washington has traditionally had much interest in it. (Military shipping is another matter: the United States Navy is by far the world's largest.) Other governments and other national financial establishments have made different calculations.

Orient Overseas, the Chinese company that owns Global and the terminal at Howland Hook, has a fleet of sixty-nine ships which includes some of the largest vessels afloat. They operate in a partnership known as the Grand Alliance, which includes Hapag-Lloyd, of Germany (a hundred and thirty-six ships), and N.Y.K., of Japan (a hundred and nineteen ships). Both Hapag-Lloyd and N.Y.K. also operate terminals. Maersk is the world's largest steamship line, with five hundred and seventy ships. When calling in New York, they use the company's own terminal, in Port Newark.

The Chinese owners are not a particularly visible presence at Global or at Howland Hook. They have never been implicated in any of the waterfront-racketeering cases; nor have they been much involved in chasing the Mob out. Howland Hook, like Global, has had its problems in this regard. A former president, Carmine Ragucci, was an unindicted co-conspirator in the 2002 waterfront-racketeering trial that sent Peter Gotti and seventeen other Gambino soldiers to prison. Orient Overseas quietly let Ragucci go that year, and replaced him with Jim De Vine, a veteran terminal manager who, by all accounts, keeps close control over the operation.

"Should I rationalize or backpedal?"

Nonetheless, in December, 2003, a major bust at Howland Hook netted a hundred and fifty-seven kilos of cocaine, with a street value of nearly four million dollars. It was the third big coke seizure at Howland Hook in less than three years. These shipments, the authorities concluded, weren't the work of old-style wiseguys but of a Colombian cartel.

The authorities have no idea, of course, how many cocaine shipments they have missed. They do know that longshoremen have been deeply involved in the smuggling. A dockworker accomplice looks for a certain container, off a certain ship, and sets it out in a designated spot in the yard. Dockworkers also serve as lookouts. "They know on the pier the second you arrive," Kevin McGowan, of the Waterfront Commission police, said. "They've all got walkie-talkies. 'Waterfront's here.' "

"What are those things?" I asked.

"Monsters!" the Reverend James Kollin replied.

They were straddle-carriers, actually; eight-wheeled and fifty feet high, they rushed past us clutching shipping containers in their jaws. They were being driven by longshoremen in little cabs suspended at the top of four huge pillars and are, in fact, known on the piers as the Insects from Outer Space. I was accompanying the Reverend Kollin, who is a chaplain at the Seamen's Church Institute, on his rounds. Kollin, a solidly built Filipino in his forties, visits ships in the port, offering help to foreign sailors. Today, he was headed for the Teng He, a Chinese ship that was being unloaded at Maher Terminal. There were sailors, he had heard, who wanted to use his cell phone, and others, with visas, hoping for a lift to a shopping mall.

The Teng He was tied up end-to-end with the Ever Delight, an Italian-

Taiwanese container ship that sails under a Panamanian flag. We climbed the gangway, and were greeted by Liang Du, the ship's chief mate, who had long, wavy hair. He wore slippers and bright-blue overalls. He escorted us into the depths of the ship. The passages were spotless. We rode an elevator up to Du's office, where curtains were drawn against the morning sun. Du had no visa, so he was stuck on the ship, overseeing some engine work and receiving fuel oil.

Du, who is thirty-two, lives near Shanghai but spends eight months a year at sea. He works for the China Ocean Shipping Company, a state-owned conglomerate with a fleet of a hundred and thirty-three ships. The Teng He's route ran from Qingdao, in northeastern China, through the Panama Canal, then up to Charleston, New York, and Boston. The crew was unloading—Du checked his papers—six hundred and twelve containers in Elizabeth. He had no idea what was in them, or who owned the cargo. (Wal-Mart, probably. It is China Ocean's largest customer.) The ship was picking up nine hundred and fifty containers, most of them empties for China. The Teng He, which is twelve years old, is nine hundred feet long, and can carry nearly four thousand standard containers. The next generation of container ships will carry ten thousand, and will have drafts too deep to enter New York Harbor fully loaded.

We went up on the bridge and watched the longshore gangs unloading the ship. Each gantry crane works a hatch—a cross-section of the ship—and each crane has a gang. The work goes fast, the operator zooming back and forth high above the ship's deck, and a great rectangular claw called a spreader swinging below. The container yard is a heavy-duty traffic accident always about to happen, and to me the dockwork looked like a high-speed ballet in hard hats, high-visibility vests, and steel-tipped boots.

Chief Mate Du was not as impressed. Too slow, he said. In Qingdao, the crews made far more moves per hour.

Other experts I asked agreed with Du. The main Chinese ports are essentially brand-new. "New York–New Jersey is ten to fifteen years behind China in port technology," Chang Qian Guan, a professor of maritime science at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, in Kings Point, New York, told me.

Chief Mate Du had been to New York eight or nine times but had never been ashore. Once, in 1998, when his ship docked in Long Beach, he went to Disneyland. I asked him if he had any interest in seeing the city. He was noncommittal. "From the river, you see a lot of broken old buildings," he said. "That was a big surprise. In the movies, on TV, America is always very splendid."

The Reverend Kollin had other ships to visit. We said goodbye, and ran the gantlet of Maher Terminal's straddle-carriers again. Just north, on the Port Newark docks, there were vast fields of new automobiles, and the ungainly ships known as Ro-Ros (roll on, roll off) tied up at the wharf, discharging more. Nearby, looking like a dirty glacier, stood an atavistic mountain of salt. But mostly it was containers, in their thousands.

I asked Kollin why he did this work. He said it was because he was Filipino, and a great many of the world's seafarers are also Filipinos. Seafarers are frequently abused, exploited, and in need of help. You rarely encounter abuse on a Chinese ship, he said, where the hierarchy and homogeneity and rules are strong, and we wouldn't see it on the ship we were visiting next, a Swedish vessel. "But some ships may have a Russian captain, Croatian officers, and sailors from the Philippines and Indonesia. Communication is poor, and the dynamics can get very difficult. Greek ships—a lot of problems." The work of the Seamen's Church, which is based in lower Manhattan and was founded in 1834, has become more difficult generally, he said, since September 11th. "The security is more strict. For instance, we have an Indian captain with us now who simply needs to get to the airport. In the past, the Coast Guard would have let us escort him, and he could go home. But now the State Department is in charge, or maybe it's Homeland Security. They're rigid, they're strict. They're not part of the port community. So he is stuck in limbo."

"If I wanted to bring an atomic bomb into the port, I'd do it through that scrap operation."

Hearing a federal official who was familiar with New York Harbor make this remark, I thought that I should check out the place he meant. Its real name is Claremont Terminal. It's in Jersey City, at the end of a maze of industrial alleyways—a roaring, muddy, twilight world of battered trucks and rusted railcars and astounding heaps of old cables, pipe, car bodies, fencing, framing, boilers, water heaters, propane tanks.

This is, of course, one of the harbor's few major exports: scrap metal and other refuse. Claremont Terminal is owned by Sims Hugo Neu, an Australian company that is the world's largest recycler of metal. With a hundred and twenty sites around the globe, Sims Hugo Neu, according to its Web site, is in the business of "processing end-of-life products." This is an excellent and honorable thing to be doing. Still, the Scrap, as people call it, looks like a place of perdition.

Like most piers, there are signs forbidding unauthorized access and, as on many piers, I went right past them unchallenged. But the Scrap feels like a truly lawless zone. For some reason, the Waterfront Commission's writ does not run here. Background checks, passes—forget all that. A lot of John DiGilio's old crew can still be found at the Scrap. Traditionally, when local dockworkers lost their passes, they came here. The federal official who told me about the Scrap has spent his career fighting organized crime. In truth, I thought, the low-probability, high-consequence event of everybody's nightmares would almost surely not happen here; that was just a frustrated lawman talking.

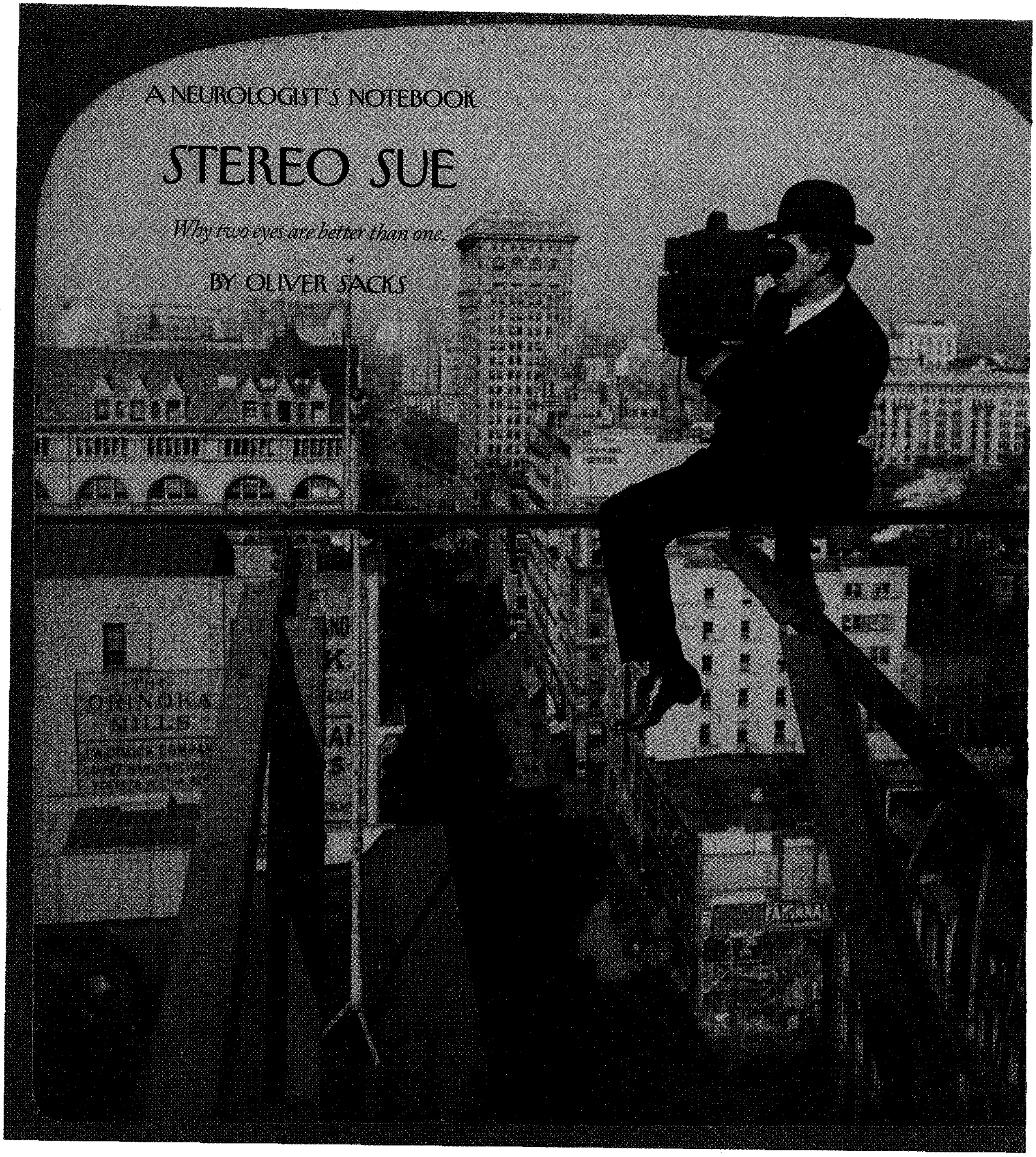
I parked my car between two trucks that seemed to have giant, dented tin cans on their backs, which were full of smaller dented tin cans. I wandered around in the rain for a while, trying to find an office, trying not to get run over by trucks. The only sign I saw was a rusted, filthy greeting on the entrance road, "Help Keep Jersey City Clean." I caught some sidelong looks from brawny guys in high-visibility vests, but everybody kept their distance. I needed some kind of introduction. The grinding and beeping of trucks was so loud, conversation would have been impossible anyway. I found my way back to my car and left. ♦

A NEUROLOGIST'S NOTEBOOK

STEREO SUE

Why two eyes are better than one.

BY OLIVER SACKS

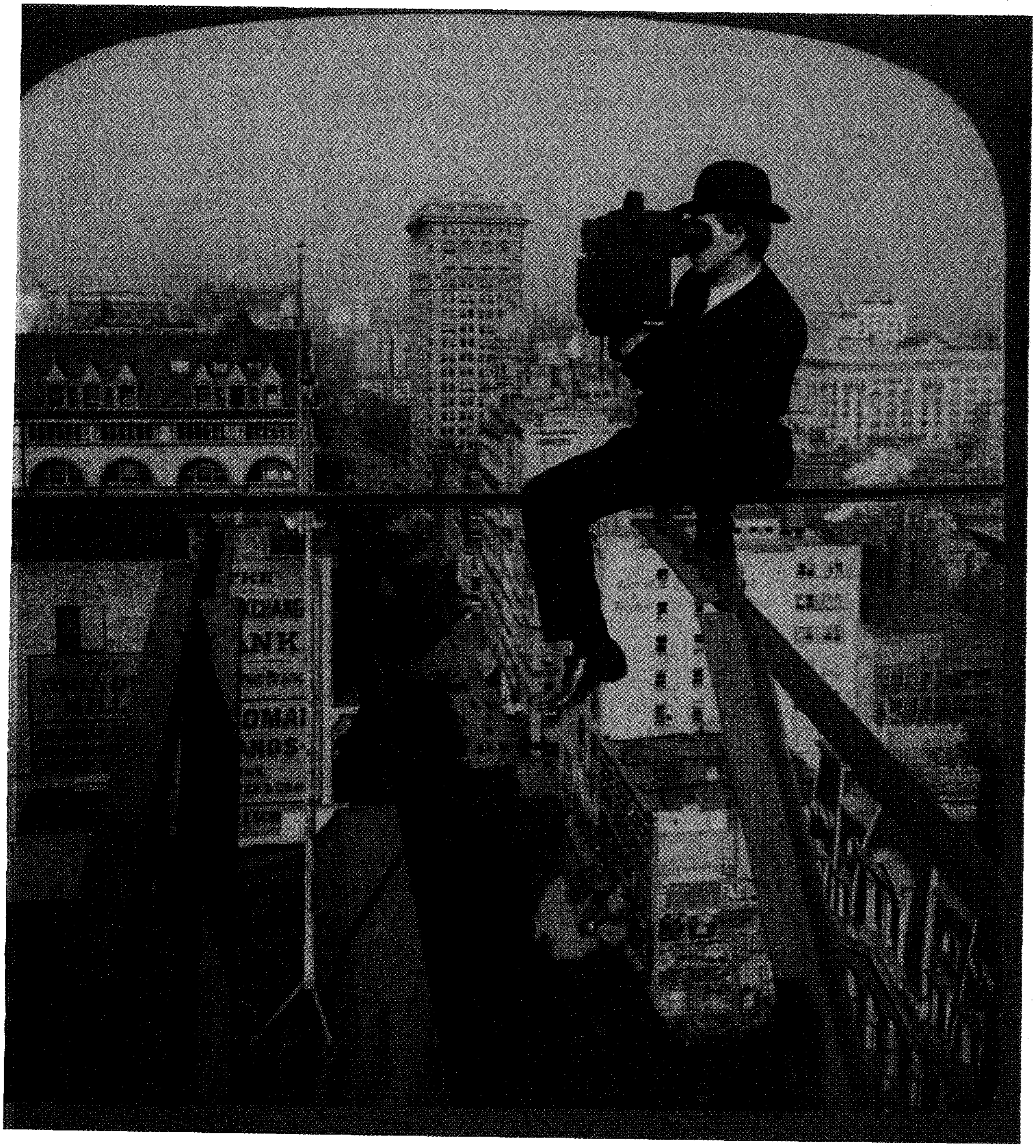


UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD/W. H. MOLL COLLECTION

When Galen, in the second century, and Leonardo, thirteen centuries later, observed that the images received by the two eyes were slightly different, neither of them appreciated the full significance of these differences. It was not until the early eighteen-thirties that the English scientist and inventor Charles Wheatstone began to suspect that the disparities between the two retinal images were in fact crucial to the brain's mysterious ability to generate a sensation of depth—and that the brain somehow fused these images automatically and unconsciously.

Wheatstone confirmed the truth of his conjecture by an experimental method as simple as it was brilliant. He made pairs of drawings of a solid object as seen from the slightly different perspectives of the two eyes, and then designed an instrument that used mirrors to insure that each eye saw only its own drawing. He called it a stereoscope, from the Greek for "solid vision." If one looked into the stereoscope, the two flat drawings would fuse to produce a single three-dimensional drawing poised in space.

(One does not need a stereoscope to see stereo depth; it is relatively easy for most people to learn how to "free-fuse" such drawings, simply by diverging or converging the eyes. So it is strange that stereopsis was not discovered centuries before: Euclid or Archimedes could have drawn stereo diagrams in the sand, as David Hubel has remarked, and discovered stereopsis in the third century B.C. But they did not, as far as we know.)



A few years after Wheatstone's discovery came the invention of photography, and stereophotographs, with their magical illusion of depth, became immensely popular. Queen Victoria herself was presented with a stereoscope after admiring one at the 1851 Great Exhibition, at the Crystal Palace, and soon no Victorian drawing room was complete without one. With the development of smaller, cheaper stereoscopes, easier photographic printing, and even stereo parlors, there were few people in Europe or America who did not have access to stereo viewers by the end of the nineteenth century.

With stereophotographs, viewers could see the monuments of Paris and London, or great sights of nature like Niagara Falls or the Alps, in all their majesty and depth—with an uncanny verisimilitude that made them feel as if they were hovering over the actual scenes. (By the mid-eighteen-fifties, a subspecialty of stereophotography, stereopornography, was already well established, though this was of a rather static type, because the photographic processes used at the time required lengthy exposures.)

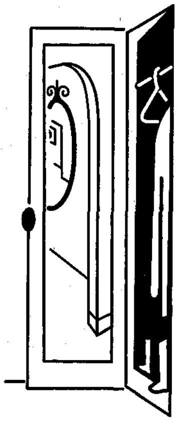
In 1861, Oliver Wendell Holmes (who invented the popular handheld Holmes Stereo Viewer), in one of several *Atlantic Monthly* articles on stereoscopes, remarked on the special

In nature, binocular vision—stereoscopy—is anything but a gimmick. It makes possible our three-dimensional world.

pleasure people seemed to derive from this magical illusion of depth:

> The shutting out of surrounding objects, and the concentration of the whole attention...produces a dream-like exaltation...in which we seem to leave the body behind us and sail into one strange scene after another, like disembodied spirits.

There are, of course, many other ways of judging depth: occlusion of distant objects by closer objects, perspective (the fact that distant objects appear smaller), shading (which delineates the shape of objects), "aerial" perspective (the blurring and bluing of more distant objects by the intervening air), and, most important, motion parallax—the change of spatial relationships as we move our heads. All these cues, acting in tandem, can give a vivid sense of reality and space and depth. But the only way to actually *perceive* depth rather than judge it is with binocular stereoscopy.



In my boyhood home, in London, during the nineteen-thirties, we had two stereoscopes: a large, old-fashioned wooden one, which took glass slides, and a smaller, handheld one, which took cardboard stereophotographs. We also had books of bicolor anaglyphs—stereophotographs printed in different colors, which had to be viewed with a pair of red-and-green glasses that effectively restricted each eye to seeing only one of the images.

So when I developed a passion for photography, at the age of ten, I wanted, of course, to make my own pairs of stereophotos. This was easy to do, by moving the camera horizontally about two and a half inches between exposures, mimicking the distance between the two eyes. (I did not yet have a double-lens stereocamera, which would take simultaneous stereo pairs.)

I started taking pictures with greater and greater separations between them, and then, using a cardboard tube about a yard long and four little mirrors, I made a hyperstereoscope—turning myself, in effect, into a creature with eyes a yard apart. With this, I could look at even a very distant object, like the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral, which normally appeared as a flat semicircle on the horizon, and see it in its full rotundity, projecting toward me. I also experimented with the opposite of this by making a pseudoscope (another device invented by Wheatstone), which transposed the views of the two eyes. This reversed the stereo effect to some extent, making distant objects appear closer than near ones, and turning faces into hollow masks, even though this contradicted common sense, and contradicted all the other depth cues of perspective and occlusion—a bizarre and disorienting experience as the brain struggled to reconcile two opposite conclusions, and alternated rapidly between rival hypotheses.

After the Second World War, new techniques and forms of stereoscopy became popular. The View-Master, a little stereoscope made of plastic, took reels of tiny Kodachrome transparencies that one flicked through by pressing a lever. I fell in love with faraway America at this time, partly through such View-Master reels of the grand scenery of the West and the Southwest.

One could also get Polaroid Vectographs, in which the stereo images were polarized at right angles to one another; these were viewed through a special pair of Polaroid glasses, with the polarization of the lenses also at right angles, insuring that each eye saw only its own image. Such Vectographs, unlike the red-and-green anaglyphs, could be in full color, which gave them a special appeal.

Then there were lenticular stereograms, in which the two images were printed in alternating narrow vertical bands covered by clear ridged plastic. The ridges served to transmit each set of images to the proper eye, eliminating the need for any special glasses. I first saw a lenticular stereogram just after the war, in the London Tube—an advertisement, as it happened, for Maidenform bras. I wrote to Maidenform, asking if I could have one of their advertisements, but got no reply; they must have imagined I was a sex-obsessed teen-ager, rather than a simple stereophile.

Finally, there was a slew of 3-D films (like the Madame Tussauds horror film, "House of Wax"), which one would look at through red-and-green or Polaroid glasses. As cinema, most of these were awful—but some, like "Inferno," were very beautiful, and used stereophotography in an exquisite, delicate, unintrusive way.

Over the years, I amassed a collection of stereograms and books about stereoscopy. I am an active member of the New York Stereoscopic Society, and at their meetings I encounter other stereo buffs. Unlike most, we do not take stereoscopy for granted but revel in it. While most people may not notice any great change if they close one eye, we stereophiles are sharply conscious of the change, as our world suddenly loses its spaciousness and depth. Perhaps we rely more on stereoscopy, or perhaps we are simply more aware of it. We want to understand how it works. The problem is not a trivial one, for if one can understand stereoscopy, one can understand not only a simple and brilliant visual stratagem but something of the nature of visual awareness, and of consciousness itself.

Some people, losing binocular vision for a long period, find the experience very disturbing. In a recent issue of *Binocular Vision & Strabismus Quarterly*, Paul Romano, a sixty-eight-year-old retired pediatric ophthalmologist, recounted his own story of losing nearly all sight in one eye, following a massive ocular hemorrhage. After one day of monocular vision, he noted, "I see items but I often don't recognize them: I have lost my physical localization memory....My office is a mess....Now that I have been reduced to a two-dimensional world I don't know where anything is."

The next day, he wrote, "Things are not the same object at all monocularly as they were binocularly....Cutting meat on the plate—it is difficult to see fat and gristle that you want to cut away....I just don't recognize it as fat and gristle when it only has two dimensions."

After almost a month, though Dr. Romano was becoming less clumsy, he still had a sense of great loss:

> Although driving at normal speed replaces the loss of depth perception with motion stereopsis, I have lost my spatial orientation. There is no longer the feeling I used to have of knowing exactly where I am in space and the world. North was over here before—now I don't know where it is....I am sure my dead reckoning is gone.

His conclusion, after thirty-five days, was that "even though I adapt better to monocularity every day, I can't see spending the rest of my life in this way. . . . Binocular stereoscopic depth perception is not just a visual phenomenon. It is a way of life. . . . Life in a two-dimensional world is very different from that in a three-dimensional world and very inferior." As the weeks passed, Dr. Romano became more at home in his monocular world, but it was with enormous relief that, after nine months, he finally recovered his stereo vision.

In the nineteen-seventies, I had my own experience with losing stereoscopy when, following surgery for a ruptured quadriceps, I was put in a tiny windowless room in a London hospital. The room was scarcely bigger than a prison cell, and visitors complained of it, but I soon accommodated, and even enjoyed it. The effects of its limited horizon did not become apparent to me until later, as I described in "A Leg to Stand On":

> I was moved into a new room, a new spacious room, after twenty days in my tiny cell. I was settling myself, with delight, when I suddenly noticed something most strange. Everything close to me had its proper solidity, spaciousness, depth—but everything farther away was totally flat. Beyond my open door was the door of the ward opposite; beyond this a patient seated in a wheelchair; beyond him, on the windowsill, a vase of flowers; and beyond this, over the road, the gabled windows of the house opposite—and all this, two hundred feet perhaps . . . seemed to lie like a giant Kodachrome in the air, exquisitely colored and detailed, but perfectly flat.

I had never realized that stereoscopy and spatial judgment could be so changed after a mere three weeks in a small space. My own stereoscopy had returned, jerkily, after about two hours, but I wondered what happened to prisoners, confined for much longer periods. I had heard stories of people living in rain forests so dense that their far point was only six or seven feet away. If they were taken out of the forest, it was said, they might have so little idea or perception of space and distance beyond a few feet that they would try to touch distant mountaintops with their outstretched hands.

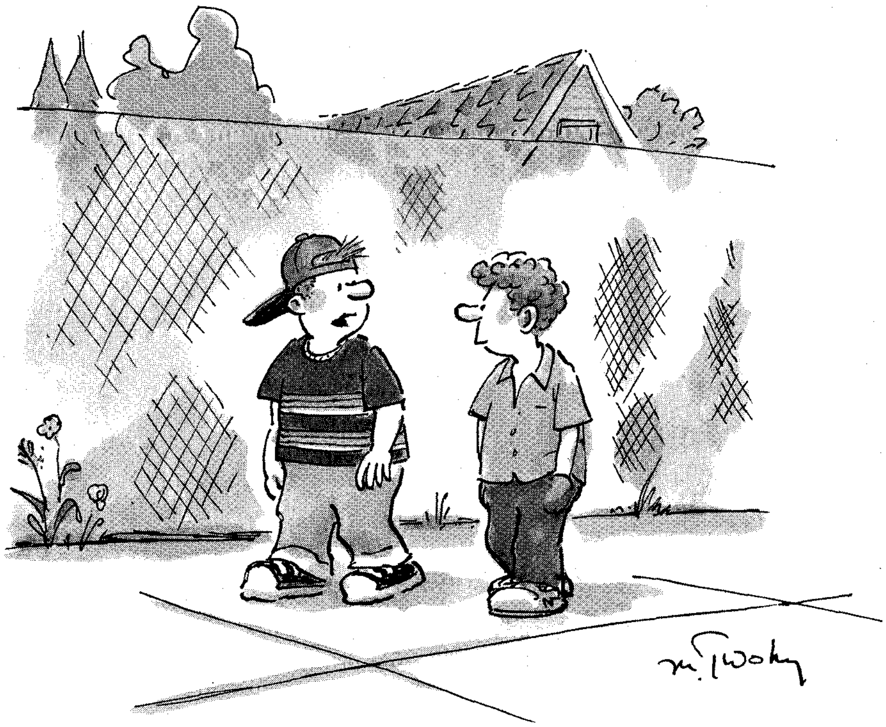
When I was a neurology resident, in the early nineteen-sixties, I read the papers of David Hubel and Torsten Wiesel, who later received a Nobel Prize for their work. They revolutionized our understanding of how mammals learn to see, in particular of how early visual experience is critical for the development of special cells or mechanisms in the brain needed for normal vision. Among these are the binocular cells in the visual cortex that are necessary to construct a sense of depth from retinal disparities. Hubel and Wiesel showed that if normal binocular vision was rendered impossible by a congenital condition (as in Siamese cats, often born cross-eyed) or by experiment (cutting one of the muscles to the eyeballs, so that the subjects became wall-eyed), these binocular cells would fail to develop, and the animals would permanently lack stereoscopy. A significant number of people are born with similar conditions—collectively known as strabismus, or squint—a misalignment sometimes too subtle to attract notice but sufficient to interfere with the development of stereo vision.

Yet there are many accounts of stereo-blind people who achieve remarkable feats of visuomotor coördination. Wiley Post, the first person to fly solo around the world, as famous in the nineteen-thirties as Charles Lindbergh, did so after losing an eye in his mid-twenties (he went on to become a pioneer of high-altitude flight, and invented a pressurized flight suit). A number of professional athletes have been blind in one eye, and so was at least one eminent ophthalmic surgeon.

There are many others—perhaps five or ten per cent of the population—who, for one reason or another, have little or no stereo vision, though often they are not aware of this, and may learn it only after careful examination by an ophthalmologist or optometrist. They may not all be pilots or world-class athletes, but many of them have no sense of visual impairment, either. Most manage to get along very well using only monocular cues, though some do have difficulty judging depth, threading needles, or playing sports.

There may even be certain advantages to monocular vision, as when photographers and cinematographers deliberately renounce their binocularity and stereoscopy by confining themselves to a one-eye, one-lens view, the better to frame and compose their pictures. And those who have never had stereopsis but manage well without it may be hard put to understand why anyone should pay much attention to it. Errol Morris, the filmmaker, was born with strabismus, and subsequently lost almost all the vision in one eye, but feels he gets along perfectly well. "I see things in 3-D," he said. "I move my head when I need to—parallax is enough. I don't see the world as a plane." He joked that he considered stereopsis no more than a "gimmick" and found my interest in it "bizarre."

I tried to argue with him, to expatiate



"For Father's Day, I'm giving my dad an hour of free tech support."

on the special character and beauty of stereopsis. But one cannot convey to the stereo-blind what stereopsis is *like;* the subjective quality, the quale, of stereopsis is unique and no less remarkable than that of color. However brilliantly a person with monocular vision may function, he or she is, in this one sense, totally lacking.

And stereopsis, as a biological strategy, is crucial to a diverse array of animals. Predators, in general, have forward-facing eyes, with much overlap of the two visual fields and, presumably, stereoscopic vision; prey animals, by contrast, tend to have eyes at the sides of their heads, which gives them panoramic vision, helping them spot danger even if it comes from behind. An astonishing strategy is found in cuttlefish, whose wide-set eyes normally permit a large degree of panoramic vision but can be rotated forward by a special muscular mechanism when the animal is about to attack, giving it the binocular vision it needs for shooting out its tentacles with deadly aim.

In primates like ourselves, forward-facing eyes have other functions. The huge, close-set eyes of many types of lemurs serve to clarify the complexity of dark, dense close-up foliage, which, if the head is kept still, is almost impossible to sort out without stereoscopic vision—and in a jungle full of illusion and deceit, stereopsis is indispensable in breaking camouflage. On the more exuberant side, aerial acrobats like gibbons might find it very difficult to swing from branch to branch without the special powers conferred by stereoscopy. A one-eyed gibbon might not fare too well—and the same might be true of a one-eyed lemur or cuttlefish.

Stereoscopy is highly conserved in such animals, despite its costs—the sacrifice of panoramic vision, the need for special neural and muscular mechanisms for coördinating and aligning the eyes, and, not least, for special brain mechanisms to compute depth from the disparities of the two visual images. Thus, in nature, stereoscopy is anything but a gimmick, even if some human beings manage, and may even do better, without it.

In December of 2004, I received an unexpected letter from a woman named Sue Barry. She reminded me how we had met, in 1996, at a shuttle-launch party in Cape Canaveral (her husband, Dan, was then an astronaut). We had been talking about different ways of experiencing the world—how, for example, Dan and other astronauts lost their sense of "up" and "down" in the near-zero-gravity conditions of outer space and had to find ways of adapting. Sue had then told me of her own visual world: she had been born cross-eyed, and so viewed the world with one eye at a time, her eyes rapidly and unconsciously alternating. I had asked if this was any disadvantage to her. No, she said, she got along perfectly well—she drove a car, she could play softball, she could do whatever anyone else could. She might not be able to see depth directly, as other people could, but she could judge it as well as anybody, using other cues.

I had asked Sue if she could *imagine* what the world would look like if viewed stereoscopically. Sue said she thought she could—after all, she was a professor of neurobiology, and she had read plenty of papers on visual processing, binocular vision, and stereopsis. She felt this knowledge had given her some special insight into what she was missing—she knew what stereopsis must be like, even if she had never experienced it.

But now, nine years after our initial conversation, she felt compelled to write to me about this question:

> You asked me if I could imagine what the world would look like when viewed with two eyes. I told you that I thought I could.... But I was wrong.

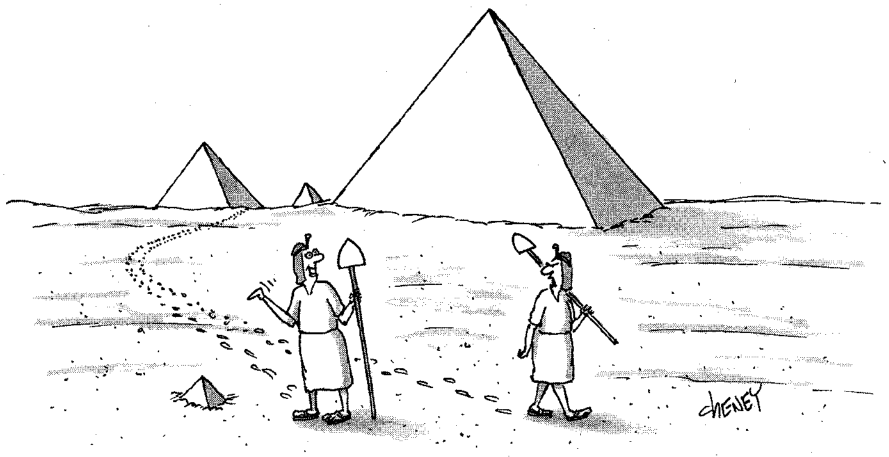
She went on to give me details of her visual history, starting with her parents noticing that she was cross-eyed a few months after she was born.

> The doctors told them that I would probably outgrow the condition. This may have been the best advice at the time. The year was 1954, eleven years before David Hubel and Torsten Wiesel published their pivotal papers on visual development, critical periods, and cross-eyed kittens. Today, a surgeon would realign the eyes of a cross-eyed child during the "critical period"...in order to preserve binocular vision and stereopsis. Binocular vision depends on good alignment between the two eyes. The general dogma states that the eyes must be realigned in the first year or two. If surgery is performed later than that, the brain will have already rewired itself in a way that prevents binocular vision.

Sue did have operations to correct her strabismus, first on the muscles of the right eye, when she was two, and then of the left eye, and finally of both eyes, when she was seven. When she was nine, her surgeon told her that she could now "do anything a person with normal vision could do except fly an airplane." (Wiley Post, apparently, had already been forgotten by the nineteen-sixties.)

She no longer looked cross-eyed to a casual observer, but she was half aware that her eyes were still not working together, that there was still something amiss, though she could not specify what it was. "No one mentioned to me that I lacked binocular vision, and I remained happily ignorant of the fact until I was a junior in college," she wrote. Then she took a course in neurophysiology:

> The professor described the development of the visual cortex, ocular dominance columns, monocular and binocular vision, and experiments done on kittens reared with artificial strabismus. He mentioned that these cats probably lacked binocular vision and



"Forget it—I'm not helping you dig up another one."

> stereopsis. I was completely floored. I had no idea that there was a way of seeing the world that I lacked.

After her initial astonishment, Sue began to investigate her own stereo vision:

> I went to the library and struggled through the scientific papers. I tried every stereo vision test that I could find and flunked them all. I even learned that one was supposed to see a three-dimensional image through the View-Master, the toy stereo viewer that I had been given after my third operation. I found the old toy in my parents' home, but could not see a three-dimensional image with it. Everyone else who tried the toy could.

At this point, Sue wondered whether there might be any therapy by which she could acquire binocular vision, but "the doctors told me that it would be a waste of my time and money to attempt vision therapy. It was simply too late. I could only have developed binocular vision if my eyes had been properly aligned by age two. Since I had read Hubel and Wiesel's work on visual development and early critical periods, I accepted their advice."

Twenty-five years passed—years in which Sue married and raised a family while pursuing an academic career in neurobiology. She had not tried to fly an airplane, but she had found she could do almost everything else, with her other, monocular ways of judging space and distance. Occasionally, she enjoyed showing off these special abilities:

> I took some tennis lessons with an accomplished pro. One day, I asked him to wear an eye patch so that he had to hit the ball using only one eye. I hit a ball to him high in the air and watched this superb athlete miss the ball entirely. Frustrated, he ripped off the eye patch and threw it away. I am ashamed to admit it, but I enjoyed watching him flounder, a sort of revenge against all two-eyed athletes.

But when Sue was in her late forties new problems began:

> It became increasingly difficult to see things at a distance. Not only did my eye muscles fatigue more quickly, but the world appeared to shimmer when I looked in the distance. It was hard to focus on the letters on street signs or distinguish whether a person was walking toward or away from me. . . . At the same time, my glasses, used for distance vision, made me far-sighted. In the classroom, I could not read my lecture notes and see the students at the same time. . . . I decided it was time to get bifocals or progressive lenses. I was determined to find an eye doctor who would give me both progressive lenses to improve my visual acuity and eye exercises to strengthen my eye muscles.

"I heard that."

• •

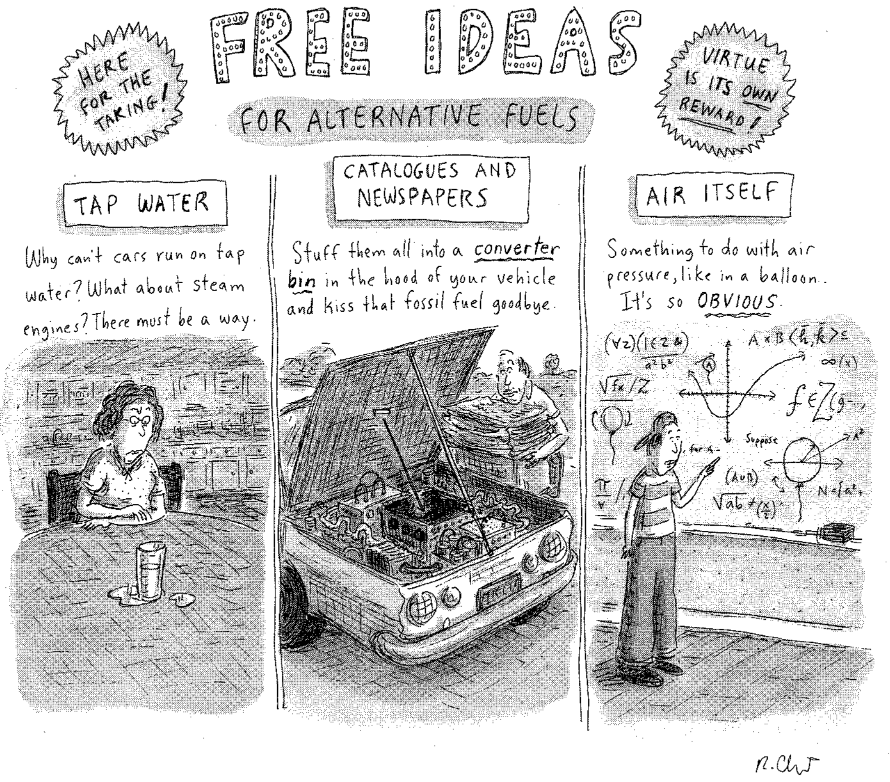
She consulted Dr. Theresa Ruggiero, an optometrist, who found that Sue's eyes were developing various forms of imbalance—this sometimes happens after surgery for strabismus—and that the reasonable vision she had enjoyed for decades was now being undermined.

> Dr. Ruggiero confirmed that I saw the world monocularly. I only used two eyes together when looking within two inches of my face. She told me that I consistently misjudged the location of objects when viewing them solely with my left eye. She explained that the shimmering, the difficulty in focusing on distant objects, resulted from binocular rivalry. I was constantly switching eyes. Most importantly, she discovered that my two eyes were misaligned vertically. The visual field of my left eye was about three degrees above that of my right. Dr. Ruggiero placed a prism in front of my right lens that shifted the entire visual field of the right eye upward. . . . Without the prism, I had trouble reading the eye chart on a computer screen across the room because the letters appeared to shimmer. With the prism, the shimmer was greatly reduced.

("Shimmer," Sue later explained, was perhaps too mild a term, for it was not like the shimmer one might see with a heat haze on a summer day—it was, rather, a rapid alternation of the misaligned images from each eye, so that whatever she was seeing seemed to jump up and down eight or ten times a second, in a dizzying way.)

Sue got her new eyeglasses, complete with the prism, on February 12, 2002. Two days later, she had her first vision-therapy session with Dr. Ruggiero—a long session in which, using Polaroid glasses to allow a different image to be presented to each eye, she attempted to fuse the two pictures. At first, she did not understand what "fusion" meant—how it was possible to bring the two images together—but after trying for several minutes she found she was able to do this, though only for a second at a time. Although she was looking at a pair of stereo images, she had no perception of depth—but nevertheless she had made the first step, achieving "flat fusion," as Dr. Ruggiero called it.

Sue wondered whether, if she could hold the eyes aligned for longer, this would allow not just flat fusion but stereo fusion, too. Dr. Ruggiero gave her further exercises to stabilize her tracking and hold her gaze, and she worked on these exercises diligently at


HERE FOR THE TAKING!
FREE IDEAS
FOR ALTERNATIVE FUELS
VIRTUE IS ITS OWN REWARD!
TAP WATER
Why can't cars run on tap water? What about steam engines? There must be a way.
CATALOGUES AND NEWSPAPERS
Stuff them all into a converter bin in the hood of your vehicle and kiss that fossil fuel goodbye.
AIR ITSELF
Something to do with air pressure, like in a balloon. It's so OBVIOUS.

home. Three days later, something odd occurred:

> I noticed today that the light fixture that hangs down from our kitchen ceiling looks different. It seems to occupy some space between myself and the ceiling. The edges are also more rounded. It's a subtle effect but noticeable.

In her second session with Dr. Ruggiero, on February 21st, Sue repeated the Polaroid exercise and tried a new one, using colored beads at different distances on a string. This exercise, known as the Brock string, taught Sue to fixate both eyes on the same point in space, so that her visual system would not suppress the images from one eye or the other but would fuse them together. The effect of this session was immediate:

> I went back to my car and happened to glance at the steering wheel. It had "popped out" from the dashboard. I closed one eye, then the other, then looked with both eyes again, and the steering wheel looked different. I decided that the light from the setting sun was playing tricks on me and drove home. But the next day I got up, did the eye exercises, and got into the car to drive to work. When I looked at the rear-view mirror, it had popped out from the windshield.

Her new vision was "absolutely delightful," Sue wrote. "I had no idea what I had been missing." As she put it, "Ordinary things looked extraordinary. Light fixtures floated and water faucets stuck way out into space." But it was "also a bit confusing. I don't know how far one object should 'pop out' in front of another for a given distance between the two objects. . . . It is . . . a bit like I am in a fun house or high on drugs. I keep staring at things. . . . The world really does look different." She included some excerpts from her diary:

> February 22: I noticed the edge of the open door to my office seemed to stick out toward me. Now, I always knew that the door was sticking out toward me when it was open because of the shape of the door, perspective and other monocular cues, but I had never seen it in depth. It made me do a double take and look at it with one eye and then the other in order to convince myself that it looked different. It was definitely out there.
>
> When I was eating lunch, I looked down at my fork over the bowl of rice and the fork was poised in the air in front of the bowl. There was space between the fork and the bowl. I had never seen that before. . . . I kept looking at a grape poised at the edge of my fork. I could see it in depth.
>
> March 1: Today, I was walking by the complete horse skeleton in the basement of the building where I work, when I saw the horse's skull sticking out so much, that I actually jumped back and cried out.
>
> March 4: While I was running this morning with the dog, I noticed that the bushes looked different. Every leaf seemed to stand out in its own little 3-D space. The leaves didn't just overlap with each other as I used to see them. I could see the SPACE between the leaves. The same is true for twigs on trees, pebbles on the road, stones in a stone wall. Everything has more texture.

Sue's letter continued in this lyrical vein, describing experiences utterly novel for her, beyond anything she could have imagined or inferred before. She had discovered for herself that there is no substitute for experience, that there is an unbridgeable gulf between what Bertrand Russell called "knowledge by description" and actual "knowledge by acquaintance," and no way of going from one to the other.

One would think that the sudden appearance of an entirely new quality of sensation or perception might be confusing or frightening, but Sue seemed to adapt to her new world with remarkable ease. She was startled and disoriented at first, but for the most part she felt entirely, and increasingly, at home with stereoscopy. Though she continues to be conscious of the novelty of stereo vision, and indeed rejoices in it, she also feels now that it is "natural"—that she is seeing the world as it really is, as it should be. Flowers, she says, seem "intensely real, inflated," where they were "flat" before.

Sue's acquisition of stereoscopy after almost half a century of being stereoblind has been a constant source of delight, and a great practical benefit. Driving is easier, threading a needle, too, and when she looks down into her binocular microscope at work she can see paramecia swimming at different levels, and see this directly, rather than inferring it by refocussing the microscope up or down.

> At seminars . . . my attention is completely captivated by the way an empty chair displays itself in space, and a whole row of empty chairs occupies my attention for minutes. I would like to take a whole day just to walk around and LOOK. I did escape today for an hour to the college greenhouse just to look at the plants and flowers from all angles.

Most of the phone calls and letters I receive are about mishaps, problems, losses of various sorts. Sue's letter, though, was a story not of loss and lamentation but of the sudden gaining of a new sense and sensibility, and, with this, a sense of delight and jubilation. Yet her letter also sounded a note of bewilderment and reservation: she did not know of any experience or story like her own, and was perplexed to find, in all that she had read, that the achievement of stereoscopy in adult life was "impossible." Had she always had binocular cells in her visual cortex, she wondered, just waiting for the right input? Was it possible that the critical period in early life was less critical than generally thought? What did I make of all this?

I mulled over Sue's letter for a few days, and discussed it with several colleagues, including Bob Wasserman, an ophthalmologist, and Ralph Siegel, a vision physiologist. A few weeks later, in February of 2005, the three of us went to see Sue at her home in Massachusetts, bringing along ophthalmological equipment and various stereoscopes and stereograms.

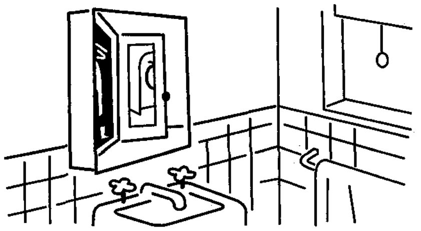
Sue welcomed us and, as we chatted, showed us some childhood photos, since we were interested in trying to reconstruct her early visual history. Her childhood strabismus, prior to surgery, was quite clear in the photographs. Had she *ever* been able to see in three dimensions, we asked? Sue thought for a moment, and answered yes, perhaps—very occasionally, as a child, lying in the grass, she might suddenly see a blade of grass stand out from its background. The grass would have to be very close to her eyes, within inches, to do this, and the standing out would last just a second or two—she had almost forgotten about this until we quizzed her. So there was a suggestion (if her memory was not playing her false) that Sue may have had a few brief and rare stereo experiences in early life, but there was no way to be certain of this.

Sue had written, in her letter, "I think, all my life, I have desired to see things in greater depth, even before I knew I had poor depth perception." Was it possible that the intensity of this wish had made her believe that she was seeing in stereo when she actually was not? It was important to test her with special stereograms that had no cues or clues as to depth—no perspective or occlusion, for example. I had brought one stereogram with lines of print—unrelated words and short phrases—that, if viewed stereoscopically, appeared to be on seven different planes of depth, but, if viewed with one eye, or without true stereo vision, appeared to be on the same plane. Sue looked at this picture through the stereoscope and saw it as a flat plane. It was only when I prompted her by telling her that some of the print was at different levels that she looked again, and said, "Oh, now I see." After this, she was able to distinguish all seven levels and put them in the correct order.

Given enough time, Sue might have been able to see all seven levels on her own, but such "top-down" factors—knowing or remembering or having an idea of what one should see—are crucial in many aspects of perception. A special attention, a special searching, may be necessary to reinforce a relatively weak physiological faculty. It seems likely that such factors are strongly operative with Sue, especially in this type of test situation. Her difficulties in real life are much less, because every other factor here—knowledge, context, and expectation no less than perspective, occlusion, and motion parallax—helps her experience the three-dimensional reality around her.

Sue was able to see depth in the red-and-green drawings I had brought. One of these images—an impossible three-pronged tuning fork such as M. C. Escher might have drawn, with three tines of increasing heights—Sue found "spectacular"; she saw the top of the uppermost prong as three or four centimetres above the plane of the paper. Bob and Ralph, by comparison, saw it as twelve centimetres above, and I saw it as fifteen centimetres above.

I found this surprising, because we were all the same distance from the drawing, and I had imagined that a given disparity would be perceived, invariantly, as a constant depth. Puzzled by this, I wrote to several neuroscientists, including Shinsuke Shimojo, at Caltech, an expert in many aspects of visual perception. He brought out, in his reply, that when one looks at a stereogram the computational process in the brain is based not solely on the binocular cue of disparity but also on monocular cues such as size, occlusion, and motion parallax. With a stereoscopic illusion, these cues conflict, the monocular ones working against the binocular ones. The brain must therefore balance one set of cues against the other, and arrive at a weighted average. This final result will be different in different individuals, because there is huge variation, even in the normal population: some people rely predominantly on binocular cues, others on monocular cues, and still others use both. In looking at a stereo illusion such as the tuning fork, a strongly binocular person will see unusual stereo depth; a monocularly oriented person will see much less depth; and others, relying more equally on both binocular and monocular cues, will see something in between.



Later in the day, we paid a visit to Sue's optometrist, Dr. Theresa Ruggiero, who described how Sue had first consulted her, in 2001. Sue had complained then of eyestrain, especially when driving, impaired clarity, and a disconcerting jumping or flickering of images—but had not mentioned her lack of stereoscopy.

Dr. Ruggiero herself was greatly surprised, she said, when, immediately after achieving flat fusion, Sue experienced stereoscopy. She speculated that Sue must have had some binocular vision and stereoscopy, even if very briefly, during the critical childhood period, or it would not have been possible for her to have stereo vision now. What was so remarkable about Sue, Ruggiero said, over and above the initial achievement of stereoscopy, was her adventurous and positive reaction to it, and her fierce determination to hold on to it and enhance it, however much work this might entail.

And it did indeed entail, and still entails, a great deal of work—taxing fusion exercises for at least twenty minutes every day. With these exercises, Sue found that she was starting to perceive depth at greater and greater distances, where at first she had seen depth only close up, as with the steering wheel. She continued to have jumps of improvement in her stereo acuity, so that she was able to see depth with smaller and smaller disparities—but when she stopped therapy for six months she quickly regressed. This upset her deeply, and she resumed the eye exercises by herself, working on them every day. Three years later, she still does them, "religiously."

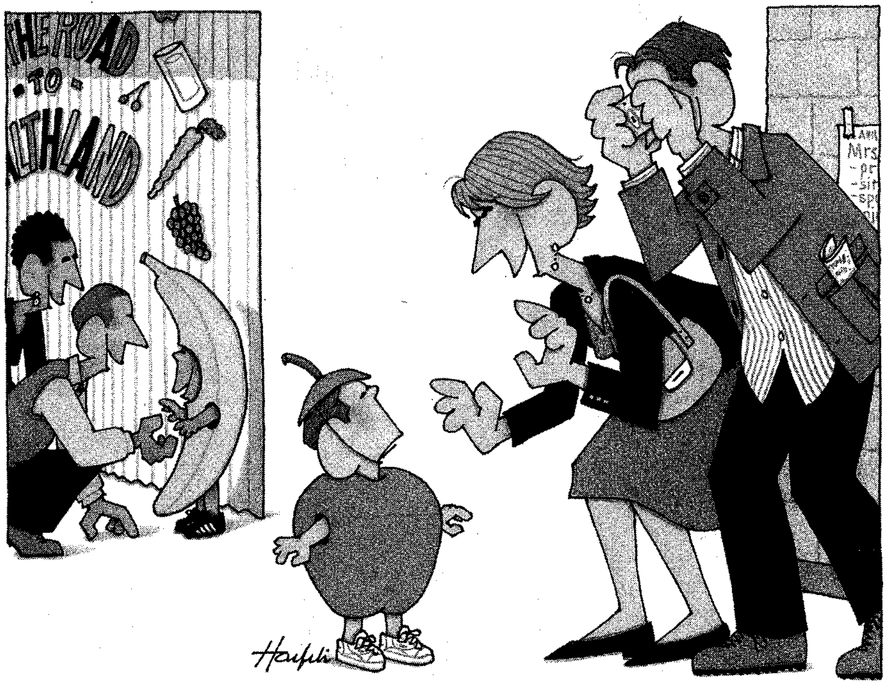
Sue has continued to work very hard on her stereo perception and stereo acuity in the months since our visit, and her perception of stereo depth has continued to increase measurably. Moreover, she has developed a skill she did not have when we initially visited her: the ability to see random-dot stereograms. Unlike conventional stereo pictures, these are constellations of dots with no images that can be seen monocularly, but which reveal images or shapes when viewed with both eyes. This illusion may take some practice, and many people, even with normal binocular vision, are not able to get it. But often, as one continues to gaze, a strange sort of turbulence appears among the dots, and then a startling illusion—an image, a shape, whatever—will suddenly appear far above, or far below, the plane of the paper. Getting these illusions is the purest test of stereoscopic vision. It is unfakable, for there are no monocular cues whatever; it is only by stereoscopically fusing thousands of seemingly random points as seen by the two different eyes that the brain can construct a three-dimensional image.

Though a theoretical understanding of random-dot stereograms came only in the nineteen-sixties, they are akin to the stereo illusions described by David Brewster, the inventor of another early stereo viewer, as early as 1844. Gazing at wallpaper with small repetitive motifs, he observed that the patterns might quiver or shift, and then jump into startling stereoscopic relief, especially if these patterns were offset in relation to one another. Such "autostereograms" have probably been experienced for millennia, with the repetitive patterns of Islamic art, Celtic art, the art of many other cultures. Medieval manuscripts such as the Book of Kells or the Lindisfarne Gospels, for example, contain exquisitely intricate designs done so exactly that whole pages can be seen, with the unaided eye, as stereoscopic illusions. (John Cisne, a paleobiologist at Cornell, has suggested that such stereograms may have been "something of a trade secret among the educated élite of the seventh and eighth century British Isles.")

In the past decade and a half, elaborate autostereograms have been widely published as "Magic Eye" books. These have added another dimension to Sue's newfound stereoscopic powers: "I find these wallpaper autostereograms easy (and quite thrilling)," she recently wrote, "probably because I practice convergent and divergent fusion regularly."

In the summer of 2005, Bob and I paid Sue another visit, in Woods Hole, Massachusetts, where she was running a fellowship program in neurobiology. She had mentioned to me that the bay there was sometimes full of luminous organisms, mostly tiny dinoflagellates, and that she enjoyed swimming among them. When we arrived, in the middle of August, we found that our timing was perfect—the water was aflame with the luminous creatures ("*Noctiluca scintillans*—I love the name," said Sue). After dark, we went down to the beach, armed with masks and snorkels. We could see the water sparkling from the shore, as if fireflies were in it, and when we immersed ourselves and moved our arms and legs in the water, clouds of miniature fireworks lit up around our limbs. When we swam, the night lights rushed past our eyes like the stars streaking past the Enterprise as it reaches warp speed. In one area, where the noctiluca were particularly dense, Bob said, "It's like swimming into a galaxy, a globular cluster."

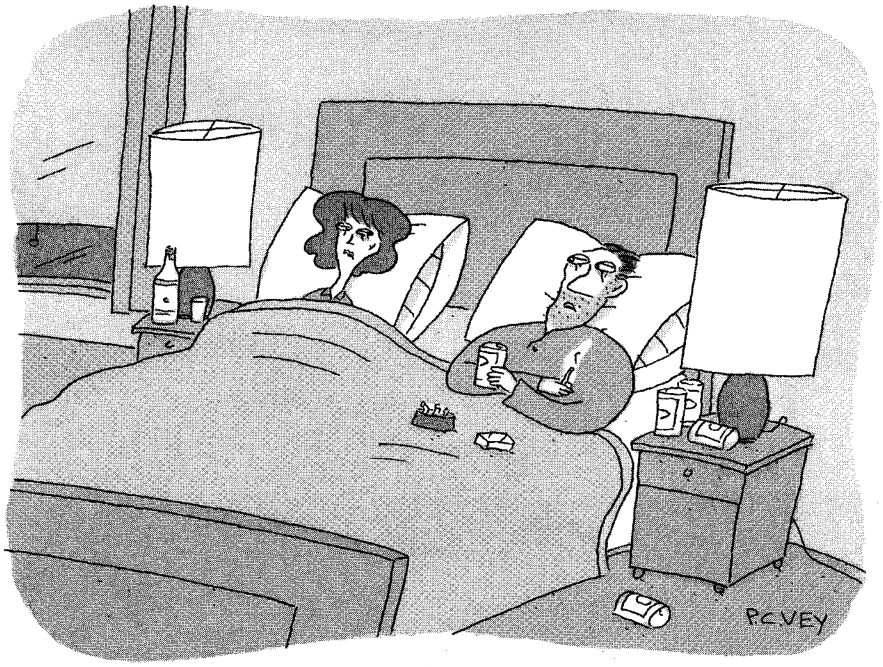
Sue, overhearing this, said, "Now I see them in 3-D—they all seemed to twinkle in a flat plane before." Here there were no contours, no boundaries, no large objects to occlude or give perspective. There was no context whatsoever—it was like being immersed in a giant random-dot stereogram, and yet Sue now saw the noctiluca at different depths and distances, in three-dimensional space. If she could do this, we mused, perhaps she could now do even better on the random-dot stereogram tests. But Sue, normally eager to talk about stereo vision, was mesmerized by the beauty of the scintillating organisms. "Enough thinking!" she said. "Give yourself to the noctiluca."



"Your apple was definitive!"

Struggling to find an analogy for her experience, Sue had suggested, in her original letter to me, that her experience might be akin to that of someone born totally color-blind, able to see only in shades of gray, who is suddenly given the ability to see in full color. Such a person, she wrote, "would probably be overwhelmed by the beauty of the world. Could they stop looking?" While I liked the poetry of Sue's analogy, I disagreed with the thought, for I suspect that someone who has grown up in a completely colorless world would find it confusing, or even impossible, to integrate a new "sense" such as color with an already complete visual world. Color, for such a person, would have no associations, no meaning.

But Sue's experience of stereoscopy was clearly not a gratuitous or meaningless addition to her visual world. After a brief confusion, she embraced the new experience, and felt it not as an arbitrary add-on but as an enrichment, a natural and delicious deepening of her existing vision. Perhaps this was because a three-dimensional world was already a perceptual reality for her, even though she had relied on non-stereoscopic means to achieve it. With color, there is no precursor—we either see a world of color or we do not—but all of us live and move in a three-dimensional world.



"Did you remember to put the dog out of his misery?"

David Hubel has followed Sue's case with interest, and has corresponded with her and with me about it. He has pointed out that we are still quite ignorant of the cellular basis of stereoscopy. We do not know, even in animals, whether disparity-sensitive cells (the binocular cells specialized for stereoscopy) are present at birth (though Hubel suspects they are); what happens to these cells if there is strabismus and lack of binocular experience in early life; and, most crucially, whether they can recover if the strabismus is repaired. With regard to Sue, he wrote, "It seems to me that [her regaining of stereopsis] occurred too quickly for it to be due to a reestablishment of connections, and I rather would guess that the apparatus was there all along, and just required reestablishment of fusion to be brought out." But, he added, "that's just a guess!"

Whether the cells and mechanisms that enable binocular stereoscopy are present at birth or form soon thereafter, the notion of a critical period of maximum sensitivity to environmental stimuli still stands fast. Without early binocular experiences, these cellular mechanisms either die out or fail to develop. But if there is any binocular vision at all during the critical period—and with strabismus there may still be some overlap of the visual fields of each eye and thus a small area of fusion—then the essential apparatus for stereopsis may be established.

What emerges from Sue's experience is that there seems to be sufficient plasticity in the adult brain for these binocular cells and circuits, if some have survived the critical period, to be reactivated later. In such a situation, though a person may have had little or no stereo vision that she can remember, the potential for stereopsis is nonetheless present and may spring to life—most unexpectedly—if good alignment of the eyes can be obtained. That this seems to have happened with Sue after a dormant period of almost fifty years is very striking.

Though Sue originally thought her own case unique, she has found, on the Internet, accounts by a number of other people with strabismus and related problems who have unexpectedly achieved stereo vision through vision therapy.

And a report that has just been published in the journal *Nature* described the case of S.K., a twenty-nine-year-old man who was born without lenses in his eyes. Though functionally blind for his entire life (he could sense little more than light and dark), he was able to acquire competent vision after being given a pair of glasses. Such an acquisition, long after the critical period, would traditionally have been considered extremely improbable. But S.K.'s case, like Sue's, suggests that if there are even small islands of function in the visual cortex, there may be a fair chance of reactivating and expanding them in later life, even after a lapse of decades, if vision can be made optically possible. Cases like these may offer new hope for those once considered incorrigibly blind or stereo-blind.

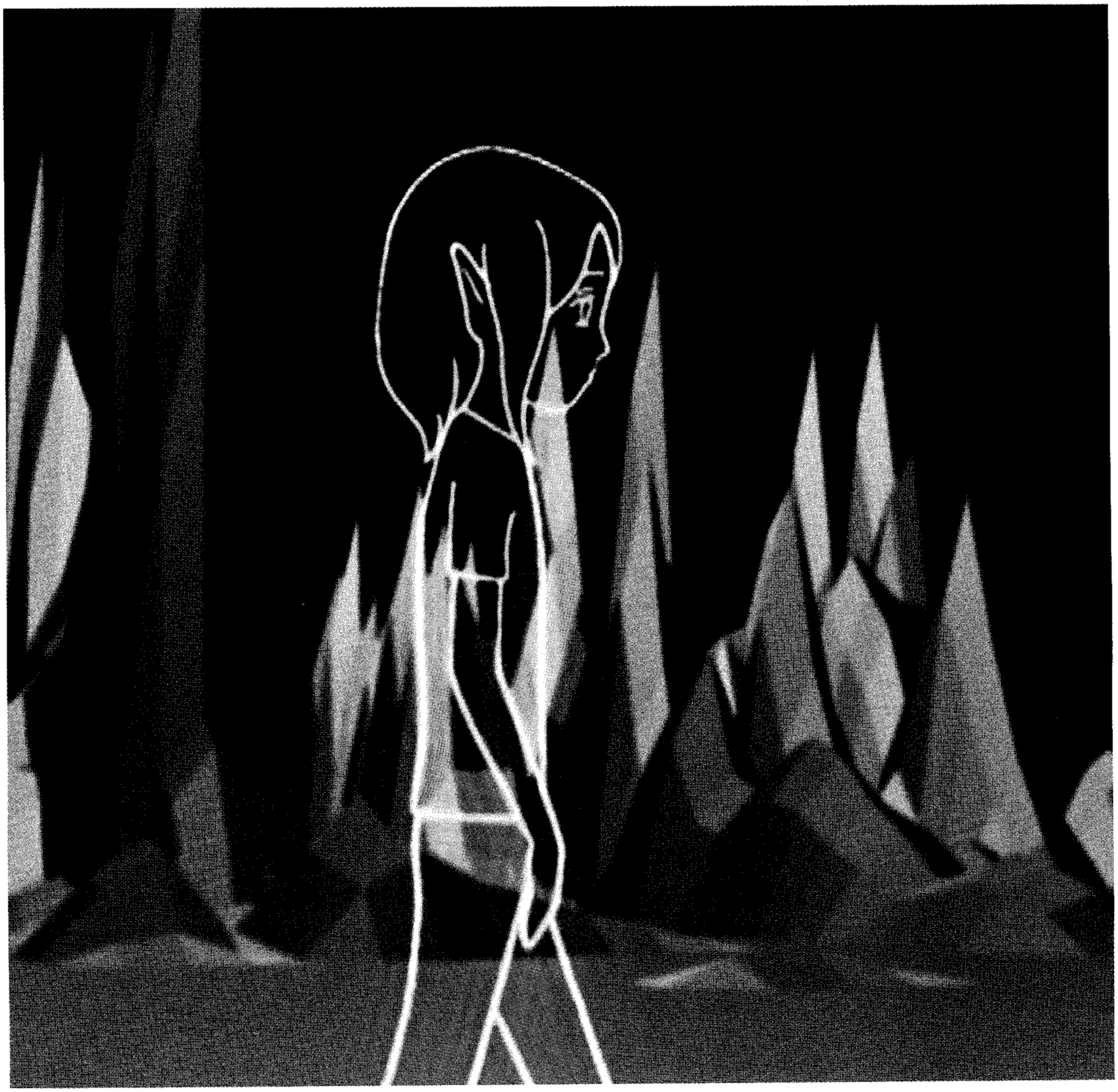
Whatever its neurological basis, the augmentation of Sue's visual world has effectively granted her an added sense, a circumstance that the rest of us can scarcely imagine. For her, stereopsis continues to have a quality of revelation.

"After almost three years," she wrote, "my new vision continues to surprise and delight me. One winter day, I was racing from the classroom to the deli for a quick lunch. After taking only a few steps from the classroom building, I stopped short. The snow was falling lazily around me in large, wet flakes. I could see the space between each flake, and all the flakes together produced a beautiful three-dimensional dance. In the past, the snow would have appeared to fall in a flat sheet in one plane slightly in front of me. I would have felt like I was looking in on the snowfall. But now, I felt myself within the snowfall, among the snowflakes. Lunch forgotten, I watched the snow fall for several minutes, and, as I watched, I was overcome with a deep sense of joy. A snowfall can be quite beautiful—especially when you see it for the first time." ♦

FICTION

ACCIDENT BRIEF

BY KAREN RUSSELL



"Hooey," Mr. Oamaru says, working his fork with silly urgency. A single pea is caught between his square front teeth. "That boy Rangi can sing. The boy just needs a friend is all. You be that, Tek. You be that friend."

My mother's prim smile confirms that I should be that friend. My Christian sisters nod their earnest brunette heads. Makeup is forbidden in our household, but my sisters have slathered their lips with beeswax, so that each syllable emerges at a blinding wattage: "Be that friend!"

My sisters all have Bible names that start with a pious growl: "Rrrachel, Rrrebecca, Rrruth." They eat unbuttered peas and fatty gristle and leave the choicest, glaziest cuts of ham for me and Mr. Oamaru. They are pretty, and this means that charity comes easy to them. They don't understand the real cost of what they are asking me.

There is a long silence full of bright, expectant stares and chewing sounds, gulping sounds, tiny metal-clinking sounds. Jesus. Peas roll around and around my selfish mouth. I can hear the reindeer outside rubbing their antlers against the fence wood. Snow waits in the high clouds. Our kitchen window fills with cold early stars.

"Why should I have to do it? Rangi is creepy, Mom. He's *Moa*. He's mute."

"Son," Mr. Oamaru answers for her. I don't look over at him, but I can feel his radiant disapproval. "Why shouldn't you have to do it? The boy is very nearly your cousin."

That's a cheap trick. Everybody in Weitiki Valley is almost a cousin. Getting married here requires an actuary to make sure you're not blood kin.

"Rangi Gibson is not my cousin."

"He's your brother," Rebecca says unhelpfully. "In Christ."

"He hasn't had your advantages, Tek." Mr. Oamaru twirls a pea on the tine of his fork. "To be orphaned at that age! And Digger Gibson is a heathen and a drunk. He can't even keep the cemetery grass mowed, much less care for a bastard child."

My mother winces at the word "bastard." *Some advantages*, I think angrily.

Rangi's a Moa orphan. His adoptive father, Digger Gibson, is the cemetery warden. Most days Digger spends dreaming in the ditches. Red-faced, his gray knuckles around a bottle. You can watch the shovel rising on his chest, then falling, a graveyard metronome.

"Why should I have to be part of the stupid Avalanche at all? Why should I have to freeze my ass off and pop my ears to sing a shitty untrue song about pirates?"

"Don't curse, Tek." Mr. Oamaru raises his eyebrows at my mother. "I wonder who he learned that language from? Nobody in this family, that's for sure."

There it is, the rustle of dead leaves. Dried sap, a branch cracking, the whirring teeth of Mr. Oamaru's saw. My father—my real father—is a limb that got cut off the family tree a long time ago. My mother coughs and cleans phantom juices off her silverware with a cloth doily. My sisters clench their knives.

"Listen, don't you bring my father into this. . . ."

"The Avalanche," peacemaker Rachel recites, "is *very important*. It's a privilege to sing it. It's a celebration of our past." Everybody around the table smiles at her.

"Yeah? Well, I've seen how easily the past can get rewritten." I glare at Mr. Oamaru. "Lyrics change. New authors come along."

If you ask me, it's perverse charity to make the mute boy rehearse with the Weitiki Valley Boys' Choir. But the director, Franz Josef, says that there is music like water frozen inside of Rangi. He wants the choir to be the heat that melts the blocks of song in him. Rangi's been in the choir longer than any of us. If his voice has changed it's done so in secret, with the stealth of wine in a dark bottle.

For our Winter Concert, the choir is flying to the Eokeora Glacier to sing down the snows. It's one of those rituals whose true meaning has been lost in antiquity, a ritual that we continue because of blind tradition and our parents' desire to booze. You can see the Eokeora Glacier from the red roof of our silo, rising thousands of feet above the valley. We bake and sell Moon Pies all year to pay for our trip to the top. (The Weitiki Valley Boys' Choir is fiscally dependent on the pity of mothers. Our Moon Pies look and taste like shoe heels.) The ice planes we hire are four-seaters, and it takes several planes to fly the entire Weitiki Valley Boys' Choir up there. It's a funny sort of concert. We leave our audience far below us, out of earshot. Our families gather at the base of Eokeora and synchronize their watches. They can't hear us, and they certainly can't see us, but they crane their necks and imagine. At precisely ten o'clock, the crowd slurs along in rough jolly voices: *Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho! The Piii-raates' Conquest!* For our finale, the choir hits the high C that triggers the avalanche. We hold that single note for as long as we can. Sometimes the weather coöperates. Then our voices send rocks crunching down the side of the glacier. Snowbursts explode off the cliffs like fireworks. Chunks of ice plummet into the moat around Eokeora, shooting up whale-flukes of water. Two years ago, we sang so well that meltwater actually hosed our parents' faces. It's a way for them to hear us, I guess, albeit indirectly. Everybody gets a little sniffly about it, especially the mothers. For some of us, this will be the last year that we can goad our voices to that altitude.

The Weitiki Valley Boys' Choir Proudly Presents:
10:00 A Stirring Rendition of "The Pirates' Conquest," conducted by Franz Josef
10:12 Avalanche
10:13 Punch and Moon Pies

In Weitiki Valley, almost everyone is a descendant of the Inland Pirates. Our great-great-grandparents sailed along the glacial river, burned their thieving boats, and then moved inland to meet the locals. The Moa were a peaceful, stationary people who killed only one another. And then our pirate forebears arrived, swilling brandy and sneezing mainland diseases all over them. "The Pirates' Conquest" is a tribute to those invaders, performed every year at the Winter Concert. It's our local anthem, these squirrelly arpeggios that celebrate our forebears' every offense. *Verse one:* The quick extinction of the Moa's sacred red penguins. *Verse two:* The depletion of their greenstone quarries. *Verse three:* The invasion of their mothers' bodies. And what did we bring the Moa in return? Grog and possums. Quail pox. Whores. These are weird things to harmonize about.

Verse four is the worst. It's a lamentation for the pirates' lost treasure (formerly the Moa's holy relics, although we downplay this detail in the song). Captain Wal-

PIERRE HUYGHE, "ONE MILLION KINGDOMS" (2001) /MARIAN GOODMAN GALLERY

ley and his men hid the profits that they'd swashbuckled somewhere in the mountains, assuming, with typical pirate arrogance, that their plunder would stay safely stashed for an eternity. But maps don't work in a country of glaciers. The treasure was lost in calved icebergs or crushed into the impasse of moraines. By the time our great-great-grandfathers returned to recover it, "X" marked a spot that had long since melted into the sea. Bar fights still break out over that treasure every once in a while, a result of our grandparents' bloody and useless nostalgia.

These same grandparents, hoarse and contemptuous, like to remind people of the true Avalanches, their Avalanches, from the early century. They have a knack for making you feel as if you were betraying your pirate lineage just by sitting in a car. "How do you like that city-boy juice, city boy?" they'll ask, watching you pour berry cocktail from a carton. Our grandparents juiced frozen berries with their teeth. They sang more sweetly than we ever will. They never sold a single Moon Pie. They got to the top of Eokeora with blood, gumption, and crescent axes, and it took them five days. It wasn't uncommon for boys to die.

"All you have to do," they wheeze, "is nudge a snow-lump over the edge with your voices. Easy."

Our Avalanche is a setup. It's a show for the cheap seats. Franz Josef flies up a few days in advance and takes a hatchet to the powder. He picks out snow that's survived the melt season: loosened by crampons, in regular contact with sunlight, eager to be sung apart and sunk into our valley. We sing, and we pretend that it's our frail voices that fracture the glacier. Theoretically, the snow could ball up and fall on us, but our parents encourage this risk with words like "tradition," "heritage," and "rite of passage." They like to believe in the old, boulder-rolling power of our song.

With any luck, this will be my last Winter Concert. I'm hoping my voice will change later this summer, and then I'll never have to sing down another avalanche. I ask God to grant me this wish every night. "God," I pray, "please deliver me from the choir." I kneel beside my attic bed on bare, hairless knees, and tune a hopeful ear for damage in my voice. I can hear my prayer being answered in the shower, where I sing test syllables. My voice sounds like the doorbell to a condemned building—shrill, with a new hollowness behind it.

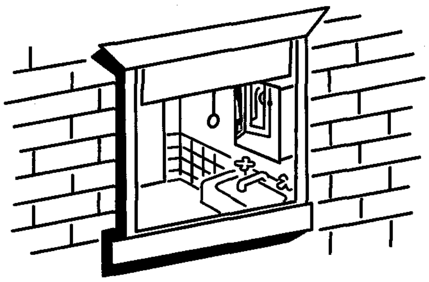
When I was a much younger boy, my mother was beautiful, but it was a sewn-up tulip kind of beauty. Then my father left. We curled in and blackened. We were heathens, you know, before Mr. Oamaru and his piratical, body-soul conquest of my mother. Mr. Oamaru has had a soft, opening effect. He paid the mortgage and made my sisters. He made my mother beautiful again. Everybody notices. Other women pay her incredulous compliments: "Why, you look like a new person, Leila. You look so *happy*."

And you know what? I hate him for it.

If you've seen me in town, I guarantee you don't remember it. Dark eyes, a red lick of hair under a dark hat. I'm not a lacy saint like my sisters, but I don't think I'm an exceptionally bad kid, either. I love my mother and my sisters, and I do my barn chores enough of the time. Mr. Oamaru seems most proud of me for the sins that I resist: I don't chew tobacco, I don't fake sick, I don't vandalize silos. Once, he actually complimented me for not "diddling with" the reindeer, as the Tau boys have been rumored to do. These are tough victories to take pride in.

Like most men in the valley, Mr. Oamaru is a reindeer farmer. He grazes his blue-gray stock on ancestral Moa land. He claims that he loves to watch me sing. When we sang down the avalanche last year, Mr. Oamaru collected an eyedropper of the melted snow. He wears it under his plaids on a fraying noose knot. "You sang well, Tek. You make a father proud." I wanted to smash that vial on sight. Everybody knows that I'm a lousy singer. On my best days, my voice blends in with the other boys' and I swallow my mistakes.

"Dad sure loves your singing," Ruth told me once, her own voice squeaky with jealousy. "He wears that eyedropper everyplace."



"That's just faucet water, dummy," I heard myself lying. "Your dad couldn't pick my voice out of the choir. Your dad thinks his pregnant cows sing better than I do."

And then Ruth was crying and I felt like a monster. But everybody knows that Mr. Oamaru is not my real father. Mr. Oamaru is my mother's husband. He is my sisters' father. Not mine.

Your father left us because he was in a bad way, my mother used to tell me.

Tek's father left us because he is a bad man, she tells everybody now. She says it again and again. She's snowing down a new past for Mr. Oamaru, a tough rock of ice in a sea of time. A new memory for our family to stand on. *Tek's father is a bad, bad man.* Mr. Oamaru has taught me that loss isn't limited to the present; it can happen in any direction. Even what's done and vanished can be taken from you. My memories of my father as a basically good person sink and revert to water. The past shifts its crystals inside me.

"To be in the Weitiki Valley Boys' Choir, you need a good attitude and the ability to sing in a pleasant, undamaged, unchanged singing voice."

—Franz Josef

On Saturday, Mr. Oamaru drops me off on the tarmac in the purple-gray predawn. We argue about "The Pirates' Conquest" on the car ride over:

"Honestly! Half that stuff is only in there because it rhymes with 'conquest.'"

Any fool can hear, from the first verse onward, how Weitiki's history has been retrofitted to the demands of rhyme and metre.

"Bronze *breast*, ice *chest*, crow's *nest*, laid to *rest*, Captain Walley's scarlet *vest*. Do you really think that Captain Walley wore a vest?"

"That song's truer than you are, son. Why, we've been singing it for longer than you've been alive! It's *history*."

It's freezing out. A wreath of icicles forms on the dash. We reach an airstrip where a bunch of sullen, sleepy choirboys are huddled together, flanked by a small fleet of ice planes. Franz Josef nods at me and checks a box. He's holding a last-minute warmup before takeoff. He has a thick, twitchy mustache and no wife. There's no magic to his conducting. He waves the metal wand with a grim, efficient panic, as if he were

A PARTIAL HISTORY OF MY STUPIDITY

Traffic was heavy coming off the bridge
and I took the road to the right, the wrong one,
and got stuck in the car for hours.

Most nights I rushed out into the evening
without paying attention to the trees,
whose names I didn't know,
or the birds, which flew heedlessly on.

I couldn't relinquish my desires
or accept them, and so I strolled along
like a tiger that wanted to spring,
but was still afraid of the wildness within.

The iron bars seemed invisible to others,
but I carried a cage around inside me.

I cared too much what other people thought
and made remarks I shouldn't have made.
I was silent when I should have spoken.

Forgive me, philosophers,
I read the Stoics but never understood them.

I felt that I was living the wrong life,
spiritually speaking,
while halfway around the world
thousands of people were being slaughtered,
some of them by my countrymen.

So I walked on—distracted, lost in thought—
and forgot to attend to those who suffered
far away, nearby.

Forgive me, faith, for never having any.

I did not believe in God,
who eluded me.

—Edward Hirsch

directing traffic, preventing collisions of sound. I miss my cue again.

"Tek Oamaru! You're a beat behind us. Chin up, eh? Enunciate. You're singing down into your chest."

I hate rehearsing this evil stuff. It makes me feel like "The Pirates' Conquest" is still happening. Usually I just lip-synch the part about the rapes and the fires. If I were braver, I wouldn't sing the song at all. I have a secret admiration for Rangi, his genius refusal to carry the tune.

"Sing it with us, Rangi!" Franz Josef commands. He kneels down and pushes his gloved hand into Rangi's diaphragm, as if he were a doctor fighting for the life of an infant sound. "Me-me-me-ME-me-me-me!"

Rangi looks as if he might bite Franz Josef.

We know that Rangi can at least mutter, because Digger Gibson says he used to talk to a bear. In the group home for orphaned Moa boys, Rangi had a pet cinnamon bear. I saw her once. She was just a wet-nosed cub, with a cuff of pure-white fur around her neck. Rangi found her on the banks of the Weitiki River and walked her around on a leash. He filed her claws and fed her tiny, smelly fish. They shot her the day Digger came to pick him up.

Rangi has given us this global silent treatment ever since, a silence he extends to people, animals, ice. Doctors say it's an elective mutism; they can't detect any trauma, can't find a gauze of sickness on his tongue.

"Burying that bear," I overheard Digger tell Mr. Oamaru once, "was the first thing we ever did together as father and son."

Rangi has tried to run away from the choir four times now, although he never gets very far: the valley is walled in on every side by glacial mountains. We think he's on an insane quest to unearth the body of the bear. He always gets "rescued" at some anonymous spot in the forest, spading up dark triangles of dirt. There are no physical markers to help him locate the burial mound, no clues to the bear's whereabouts outside of his own childhood memory. Digger never put down a stone. Rangi could dig forever and find only yellow bromide and shallow roots.

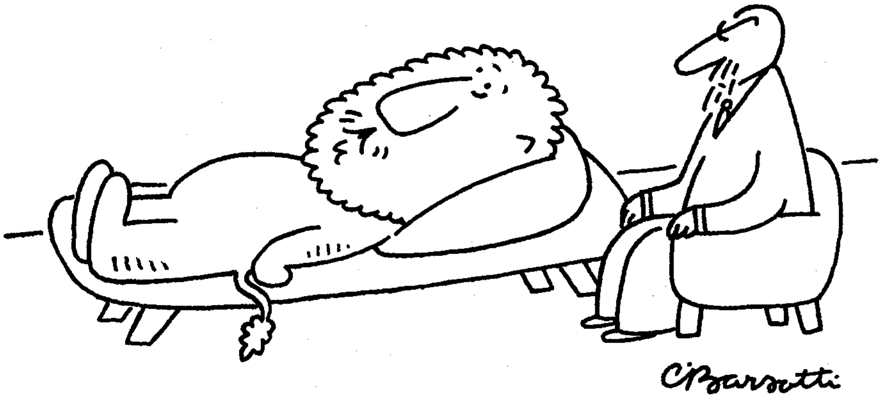
"Me-me-me-ME-me-me-me!" Franz Josef keeps prompting. His hand pushes down with more encouragement. "Me-me-me—*omph!*"

Franz Josef's head snaps forward. His wire spectacles and conductor's wand go flying. There's a moment of shocked silence, and then the clearing erupts with laughter. Brauser has nailed Franz Josef in the back of the head with a mammoth snowball.

Brauser's a sociopath with a pleasant tenor. He's smirking at us from the tree line, scooping up more powder. It's unclear whether Brauser was trying to hit Franz Josef or Rangi. I hope it was the former. That's one difference between a bully and a hero, I guess: good aim.

Then Brauser starts pelting the altos with indiscriminate glee, making my hero theory less tenable. Franz calls a stern halt to our rehearsal, as he searches the snow for his wand.

Rangi, meanwhile, has wandered away. He is sitting on a low fence at the edge of the airstrip, staring off into the trees. I take one step toward him, then



"Every year, the zebras get faster and faster."

• •

another. *Be that friend* becomes the wind pushing me forward.

"Hey, Rangi? Listen, I'm sorry for . . . you know, I have this stepfather . . ." I trail off, uncertain of how to trap words with this web of feeling inside me. Rangi turns and stares at me with a mirror's flat assessment, merciless and impersonal. I can see how stupid I must look to him. "I just wanted to say that I'm sorry," I say, shrugging. Then some secret life flames in Rangi's eyes, and for an instant I feel the same ache quivering between us. It's over so quickly that I wonder if I imagined it. Rangi goes back to studying invisible symmetries in the snow. I jog off through the light flurries, hoping that Brauser and the others didn't see me back here.

A few minutes later, the planes begin to roll forward, the white egg of the sun reflected in their dark windows. On the glacier, the sun is so violently bright that, without special lenses, ice pilots can burn through their corneas in half an hour. Today, there are four of them on the tarmac, all with matching ski suits and identical lavender eyes. Each pilot walks around and whumps the red belly of his fuselage. They introduce themselves: Steve and Steve and Steve and Hone Te Kauriki-himi. "Call me Steve," Hone says, with a bitter curl to his lips, and we all laugh with relief. His eyes are lavender, too, but you can see their true tea color behind the contacts. Hone comes around with a bucket of eel-yellow transponders and goes from boy to boy, looping them around our necks.

"These willies need to be jiggered at all times," he says.

"Why?"

"In case something goes less than good with the Avalanche." The cold, calloused pads of Hone's fingers brush my neck. He flips the switch to On. "We need to be able to find you boys if you get buried."

The transponder feels stone-heavy around my neck. I wish that Hone would make just one more joke.

Steve No. 2 hands us each an ice axe and a sack lunch. My axe is crusted with triangles of rust or blood. My sack lunch is salami. The pilots start to load up the planes. Steve No. 3 does a head count and frowns down at the manifest.

"Franz Josef? There are some names missing on the manifest?"

A whispered conference. Brows furrow in our direction. Franz smiles at us, and I catch a whiff of conspiracy.

"Mr. Gibson, Mr. Oamaru, Mr. Brauser, there's been an, ah, error of logistics. You boys don't mind waiting for an extra plane? Very sure? Most certain? Well."

The substitute pilot forgot his contacts at the lodge. He seems momentarily flustered, blinking out the cockpit window. Then he winks one naked gray eye at us and flashes us a terrifying grin.

"Can you boys keep a secret?"

"Rangi can!" Brauser laughs. He is rendered apoplectic by his own wit. "That's the only thing Rangi's good for! Because he's *dumb*. Ritardaaaando!" He flicks at Rangi's left earlobe. "Figaro, figaro, you fuckin' psycho."

"He's not deaf, you know." I am careful to say this in a coward's voice, too soft for Brauser to hear.

"It's O.K. for me to call Ritardando dumb"—Brauser's face goes crumple-smug—"like how it's O.K. to call a female dog a bitch. Because it's the truth."

The substitute pilot laughs. "Good news! Nothing wrong with keeping your quiet." He gives Rangi a friendly thump on the back. "Same goes for you two. No reason to go blabbing to the Steves that I flew you up without my lenses."

Rangi's expression remains flat and illegible.

"Dumb-dumb-dumb-dumb biiitch!" Brauser really does have a lovely contralto. He can hit, color, and hold a note like a buxom Viking princess. Otherwise, Franz Josef would have kicked him out of the choir a long time ago. I'm sure it's no coincidence that Brauser, Rangi, and I got volunteered for the last flight up here. Franz Josef often refers to us as his "problem" voices. He's probably overjoyed for an excuse to begin the concert without us.

Brauser's melodic insults fill the cabin—*Dumb-dumb-dumb-dumb*—a song that thuds into us like hailstones. He sings it until I want to scream. Rangi listens like someone locked indoors, watching the weather from behind his cell window.

During the flight up, I close my eyes and try to ignore the tremors of the cabin. It's a perilous ascent. We rise through a low, gold-limned mass of clouds. The valley falls away from us in waves. Then nothing but frost and seracs, freckled with shale. The plane has to do all sorts of dubious maneuvers in order to enter the openings in the Southwest Icefalls, a dozen squint-thin eyes in the glassy rockface. Up here, it's cratered and lifeless terrain. Mt. Kei looks like a cloud volcano in the rising sun, bubbling ochre and maroon. Brauser is telling some stupid joke about my father and a female reindeer. Rangi's staring into the cockpit at the giddy, spinning controls. He gnaws on all four of his fingers. Clouds stream around the small windows. The substitute pilot is massaging his temples with both hands.

Everybody is injured in the crash. The wind screams across the flat snowfields. Both skis snap off on impact, and the plane slides to a stop on its belly. The substitute pilot makes it out first, kicking through the cockpit door. I ignore his outstretched hand and tumble face first into the snow. It's four feet of fresh powder. There is nothing up here, no points of reference. Just snow forever, pocked with these turquoise holes like painted whirlpools—crevasses, deep enough to gulp us whole. On a glacier, the ground is just an illusion, a slick disguise for a million chasms. I try to push onto my knees and let out a whimper. Brauser has rolled a few metres away from me, and I wait for him to curse or shout. But Brauser is lying fish-eyed in the snow. Not moving. Not blinking. I follow his blank gaze and see nothing. No choir director, no altos, no tenors, no planes. We are alone on the glacier.

"Excuse me, sir?" I say. Etiquette and panic duel in each syllable. "Where are, um, the other planes?"

Is it possible, I wonder, that we have wrecked on another glacier, the wrong glacier? Usually, the planes do a smooth glissando right into the Ice Amphitheatre. Franz Josef conducts during touchdown, keeping three-four time. When I turn around, I see that the substitute pilot's smile has started to run like gravy. His face looks sick and yellow in the light. He yells something and points behind us.

As we watch, the ski plane starts to slide backward.

"Fuck."

The substitute pilot stands there for what feels like a very long time. Then he starts running, falling and running and running and falling, so slowly, through the deep virgin snow.

"Fuck. Fuck."

The plane skids faster and faster. It slides at a whistling speed. A dazzling wake of frost explodes up around it.

"Fuck!"

And then it slides, soundless and dreamlike, over the ridge.

On his dazed walk back to us, the substitute pilot falls into a shallow blue crevasse. "Help!" The substitute pilot waves his arms. He's up to his waist in snow. At a lower altitude, this would have made me laugh out loud.

"Help me! Don't just stand there, kid."

I just stand there. I know better than to walk over. Somehow, I know that if I extend my hand now I will be infected with the pilot's helplessness, his gibbering fear. I hear myself barking orders, full of steely contempt. What a crybaby. What a true fuckup. It's an angry feeling that I used to get on the farm when my father first left, an anger I used to immunize myself against my mother's terror.

"Just lift your legs, one at a time," I tell him. "We need your help over *here*."

Behind us, Brauser is moaning. His cries swell and sky-crawl. It's a wordless sound, a wild sound, this animal pain that can't be haltered and led to meaning. It reminds me of the time that Mr. Oamaru had to shoot a two-headed reindeer calf, and for a horrid instant both heads lowed in tandem. They sang their way across some abominable threshold. I still hear them screaming in nightmares. For months afterward, I plugged up my ears with my mother's "Dolly Nutmeg Reads the Bible!" cassettes and refused to enter the barn alone. This is the worst sound, I think, the very worst sound in the whole world.

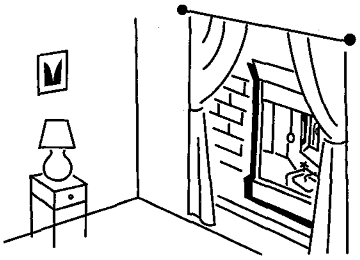
Then the moaning stops. Brauser's movement stops. And I regret all my hasty judgments. Any sound is better than this.

"Brauser? Brauser!"

Where are the others? My head is throbbing. *Where are the other planes*?

Already, Brauser's marigold hair has become hoary with snow. With his bare white head and his curled-in spine, he looks like a rapidly aging man. He blows crimson spit bubbles, which I pop immediately, scared and weirdly embarrassed. Rangi sits in a shocked, straight-backed silence in the bowl left by the vanished wreck, still holding tight to his sack lunch. The soggy bottom's torn apart. His sandwich bread and apple slices litter the snow.

The substitute pilot manages to hoist himself out of the crevasse and stumble over. "Boys," he says, but he directs every word at me. He holds up a hissless walkie-talkie. "I need to slide down to where I can get reception. I'm going to call for a helicopter rescue. Don't go anywhere until that heli comes, eh? Don't move a muscle."



I nod. Brauser twitches once, then stops.

The substitute pilot is already half crawling, half sliding down the empty snowfield.

"Wait up, I'll come with you!" I start after him, unsteady in my boots, and fall sideways into the snow. "Wait for me!"

Halfway down the run, the substitute pilot turns around and shouts something: "——!"

His words break apart on the ice. Then he scoots down the snowfield on his back, shooting into a sterling ice cave like a pinball.

"What? What was that? Hey, buddy, we can't hear you."

Brauser is slumped half-dead in the snow. Rangi exhales plumes of silence. I crawl a few feet away and slam a shallow hole in the powder. I open the cramped fist of my stomach, squeeze my eyes shut, and retch.

"Music is pleasant not only because of the sound of many voices but because of the silence that is in it."

—Franz Josef

Weep! Weep! All of our transponders beep in unison. There's a silence of five seconds between each tiny sonic burst. I fiddle with the black knob on mine. Together, the transponders sound like panicked crickets. How, exactly, will the rescue helicopter use these tiny chirps to find us?

"Brauser?"

Something necessary is ebbing out of Brauser's eyes. Snow collects between his lashes. A trickle of strawberry-red blood dribbles out of the corner of his mouth.

After some experimentation, I discover that if I poke Brauser to the right of his belly button he'll make a sound. A gargle. Poke! A burp of despair. There's something pitiable and terrifying about the unconscious bully. His crumpled nose and scarf.

Brauser opens one blue eye and stares at me. I look away. I brush the snow off his cold earlobes. This is the first true thing that Brauser and I have ever shared, this fear, besides dog-eared songbooks and cafeteria noodles.

"Hold on, Brauser," I say without conviction. "Help is on the way."

I wonder, briefly, if I could eat Brauser if it came to that. At this point, we have been alone on the glacier for fourteen minutes.

Brauser's face is a raw, freckly pink. I find his hat and fix it on his head. The shadow of my hand moves back and forth over his open eyes. Pupils expanding, pupils contracting. A dark-blue ring around the world. Between breaths, I realize that something incredible is happening at this new elevation. Up here you can hear everything—the orange ping of light on metal, the purr of water melting. These blue ocean contractions in Brauser's eyes. The faint tidal whooshing of his pupils. Shadows sound like feed pouring out of a cloth sack. When I move my hand, millions of shadow-grains bounce along the hard snow. That's my sound, I think, birdseed raining out of a sack. It shakes out across the empty snowfields. I look up at the sky, nervous. What sort of bird, I wonder, is my shadow designed to be food for?

Above us, the sun bounces orange and yellow. The silence changes. We bump noses, but I can't hear Brauser's eyes anymore, or his shadow. I tug his hat down harder.

Rangi's air pulses red like a swallow's breast. Brauser's quiet is coma-white. My own silence hums with these black and yellow bee-stripes of fear:

YOU ARE
GOING
TO DIE UP
HERE
NOBODY KNOWS
WHERE
YOU ARE
THERE IS
NO MORE DOWN
THERE

I snap out of it when I realize that Rangi has started walking away from us. He pushes through the shallow crater left by the ice plane, stabbing his crampons into the jellied snow. Then he climbs over a ridge of wind-scoured shale and disappears.

"Rangi! Wait up!"

It takes me a full five minutes to cover the short distance between us and clamber over the wedge of shale. Rangi is waiting for me on the other side. "Why did you—" The question dies on my lips. No explanation is forthcoming from Rangi. We lie flat on our bellies, taking labored breaths and watching the sky, two soldiers in the trenches. Then Rangi starts making a sound. Nothing quite so deliberate as speech, but a dense fizz of noise, like bubbles zipping up to the surface of a tall glass.

"Sss . . . sssh," he says, pointing into the clouds.

We both look up. A helicopter is coming for us, the sun pinging off its blades.

"We're saved!"

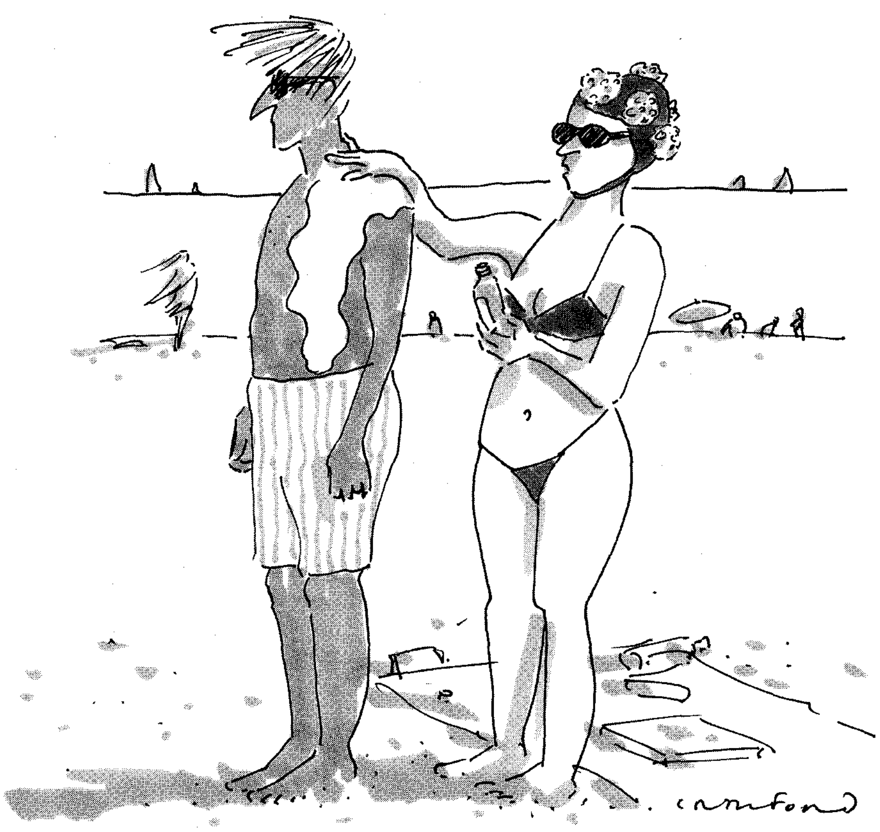
Rangi and I peer over the ridge and watch as the helicopter touches down on the glacier. Two men leap like flames out of the cockpit. Their vests glow red against the pure-white backdrop. In the glare off the snow, their faces look like taupe holes.

The men unload three stretchers from the helicopter and lay them flat across the powder. They heave Brauser onto the first stretcher. One of the rescuers is whistling a cheery tune that I recognize, the roll-credits music from a TV comedy show. It's a scary, incongruous sound in this landscape.

"Help!" I jump up and pull Rangi out of the powder, puppet-jerk him to life. The rescue pilot is still whistling, oblivious of us. "Come on, Rangi, look lively or they won't see us. Here!" I start to wave and shout. "Here! We're over he-e-ere!"

Then I'm face down in snow. I can feel Rangi's breath on my neck, his bony knees digging into the base of my spine. Something thunks against the back of my head, and for a moment red stars cluster in my vision. Rangi grabs me by the legs and starts dragging me across the ice gully. I'm stunned but still conscious, too shocked to struggle. Then he yanks me over a snowbank and out of sight. The world goes blue-white-blue for a series of hills. I yelp and try to kick away, but Rangi's got me. He presses me to his chest in a murderous bear hug as we roll. We slide down the long slope together and bang our way into an ice cave. In the lunar shadows, it looks as if our cheeks were sweating blue light. The altitude here manifests itself as a pernicious thirst, and my throat burns in the desiccated air of the cave. Inside, a twinkling, chandelier light fills every ablation. Even seated, I can reach the cold ceiling. I touch my tongue to the cold roof of my mouth.

The helicopter is taking off without us. It makes three buzzard-circles above us, and I'm surprised to find myself cow-



"I didn't know you liked ranch so much."

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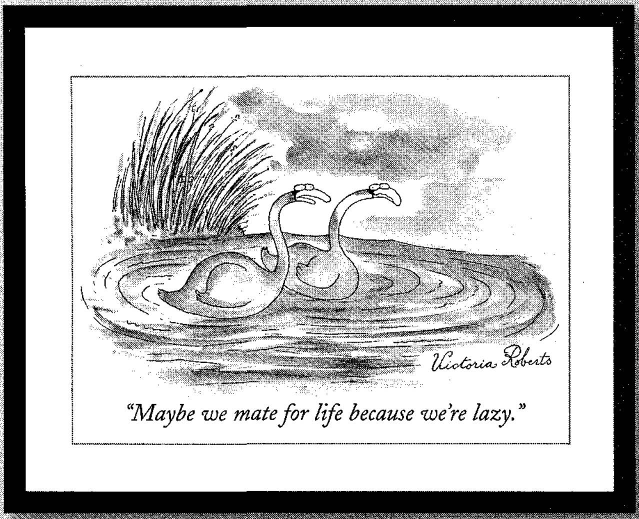
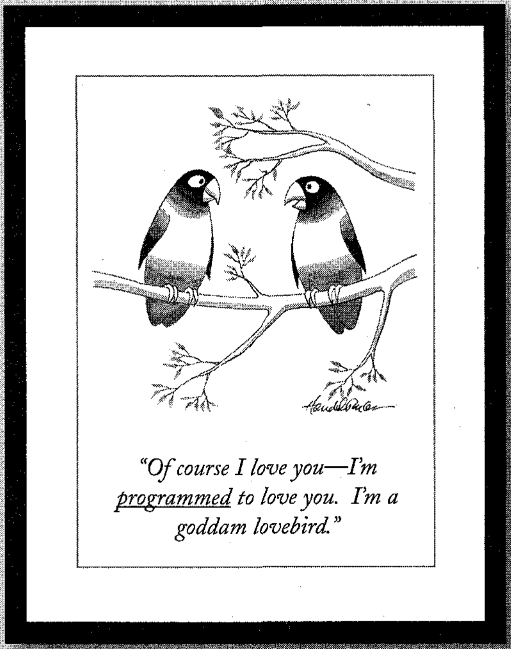


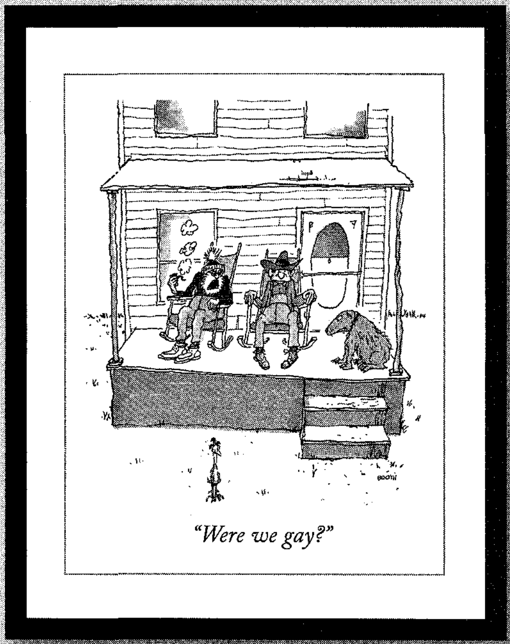
"Maybe we mate for life because we're lazy."

Victoria Roberts, 2005



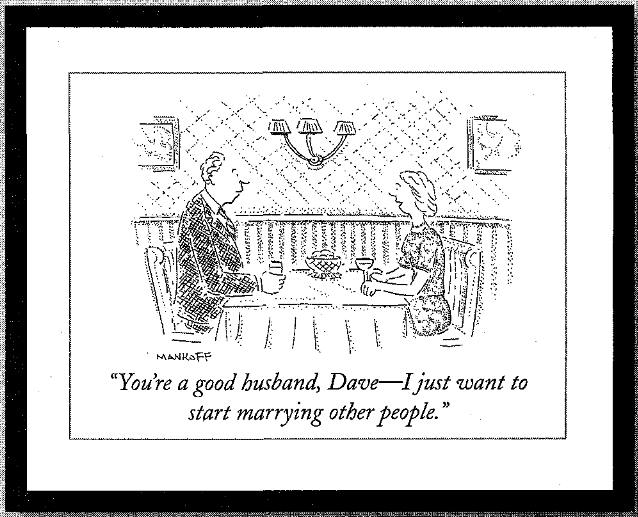
"Of course I love you—I'm programmed to love you. I'm a goddam lovebird."

J. B. Handelsman, 1993



"Were we gay?"

George Booth, 2006



"You're a good husband, Dave—I just want to start marrying other people."

Robert Mankoff, 2006

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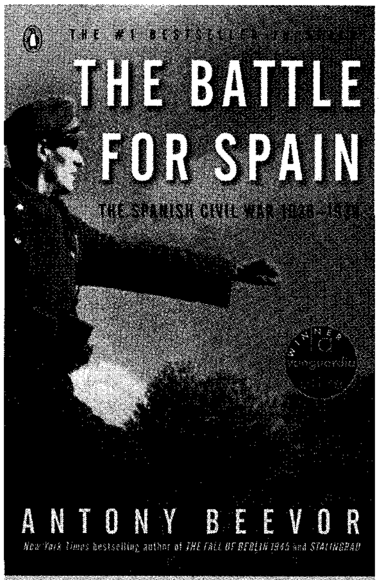
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ering with Rangi in the cave. I should be jumping up and down, screaming at its metal belly. I think about Franz Josef's hand pressing hard on my diaphragm. Up here I can't untangle whatever twisted umbilical binds deep panic to sound. I open my mouth and release dead air. *Snip, snip!* go the scissors of the wind.

Rangi holds his hands over his ears and buries his face in my side. He doesn't attempt to speak again. The helicopter shrinks into a dense pinprick of noise above us. Then it's gone.

When I look down and see Rangi staring up at me, I feel my stomach heave a second time.

"W-what-what the hell were you thinking?" My teeth are chattering uncontrollably. "Do you enjoy being stuck up here? Those men were here to *rescue* us, Rangi!"

Rangi closes his eyes and *smiles*. He beams at me with a ghastly relief. I move away from him, horrified.

"Who knows how long it will take before they send another helicopter? It could be hours!"

Anger flares through me and my muscles tense to hit him, a violence that clenches once and then vanishes. My fists uncurl without my conscious intervention. I stare down at my open palms with real surprise, feeling shaky and defeated. It's as if my body knew before I did that it's too dangerous to feel this way toward Rangi. Right now, he's the only other human around for thousands of vertical miles.

"Rangi? What are you doing?"

He is on his hands and knees, crawling toward me, his face flickering in the cave light. His black eyes sparkle with intent.

"*Ran*-gi?"

My voice has a wobble in the middle, like a tightrope strung between two fears. It sounds as if a sly little demon were bouncing across it.

"Come on, Rangi!" I say nervously. "I'm not mad, O.K.? Let's go back to the snowfield. Don't you want to get down from here? Don't you want to get home?"

Rangi holds a finger to his lips. His breathing comes quick and adenoidal when he reaches up and flicks off his transponder. Before I can even process what's happening, he rips it off his neck and lobs it, with a casual madness, into the blue maw of a crevasse.

"No!"

The transponder bumps along a toothy crag of shale, then drops into a narrow opening in the ice.

"Oh-no oh-no oh-*God*-oh-no, *why* did you do that? Now you've done it, Ritardando, now you've really done it. . . ."

I tear off my own transponder and jam it deep into my pocket, where Rangi can't get at it. Then I belly-squirm out of the cave and peer over the lip of the crevasse. The chasm glows with the loveliest, least hospitable colors: cold white stars, the green of interstellar vapors. It reminds me of the old stories, kids' stuff, about sirens who swam in deep pools and thrashed up snowstorms with their merscales. Pirate lore. "X"-marks-the-spot stuff. But I'm in no position to appreciate the fantasy shades of white and green inside the chasm. The only color that I want to see is the plastic yellow of Rangi's transponder.

This is when I plunge my arm into the ice hole, up to my elbow, fishing around on a ledge for the transponder, and come up with a fistful of treasure.

It's really true, then, the part about the treasure. I'll have to admit to Mr. Oamaru that I was wrong about our history, that "The Pirates' Conquest" isn't all lies and stupid rhymes; there are at least a few bars of truth in our song. Here's the stolen Moa patrimony: greenstone, river pearls, whale-tooth combs. The crevasse has swallowed the transponder but offered up treasure. Soon I've amassed a tall stack of greenstone. I wonder if these are the Moa's holy relics, melted down into anonymous nephrite bricks. I pull out coins, too, orange and red metal. They must have been here for a century or more. Each is chiselled with a historic profile, a numismatic portrait of the old Moa leaders. Nobody we sing about in "The Pirates' Conquest." You can't even make out their gender anymore, just high collars, proud noses, stout asparagus braids in green copper. Men or women from some past that never made it into our music. I would have preferred a miracle that benefitted us more directly.

"Here you go, Rangi!" And suddenly I'm laughing, I'm shaking all over, in total hysterics. My body feels like a great chattering tooth. "We'll split it! Fifty-fifty . . ."

Rangi refuses to touch the treasure. I grab him by the elbows and twist open his palms. I place a brick of the luminous nephrite in each of his hands—enough that, if Rangi ever got back to town, he could become the cemetery's sole proprietor. He could employ Digger Gibson.

"Take it!" I scream. "It's yours, it's yours, take it!"

What a small, cold fortune. Rangi lets it sink into the snow. He just wants a fistful of bear fur. I want my father.

"Well, I hope you're happy," I hiss.

Rangi doesn't look happy; his face is still a mask of old fury. I picture that dead bear loping and slathering forever inside Rangi, a long-toothed loyal animal, his one memory of love. Digger Gibson should never have adopted him. Who wants salvation when it just orphans you further?

I lean my cheek against the translucent outer wall of one of the caves. Water whispers inside: *You are going to die up here—nobody knows where you are. . . .* Any place, then, can become a cemetery. All it takes is your body. It's not fair, I think, and I get this petulant wish for ugly flowers and mourners, for my mother's familiar grief. For somebody I love to tend my future grave.

A clear braid of liquid trickles across the cave, snow that fell in 1947, 1812, earlier still, released suddenly like tears from an eye. In the valley, it's easy to forget that the ground is moving, that we're travelling on a frozen river. But up here I can hear it happening. Centuries of water are melting in the heart of the glacier, a constant interior roar that calves icebergs into the black sea. Even now, we're moving away from Weitiki Valley. I'd give anything to be back in my kitchen with Mr. Oamaru, swapping lies about my father. I'd pay any price to open my eyes and find myself in the Ice Amphitheatre with the boys' choir, all of us holding that single note.

And then I get a hero idea. If I can sing down an avalanche on my own, the families at the base of the glacier will see it and send help. Mr. Oamaru's weathered face floats up into my vision and I make it a target for all my terror. I pitch my voice so high that my forehead starts throbbing. Higher, and higher still. Breath floods out of my lungs. The note beckons and retreats above me, round and luminous, like the sun viewed from the bottom of the Weitiki River. My voice rises like a hand struggling to break the surface of the water. I wonder if it's like this for Rangi, too; if Rangi's mutism just means that he has sunk several fathoms farther down than the rest of us, and given up swimming.

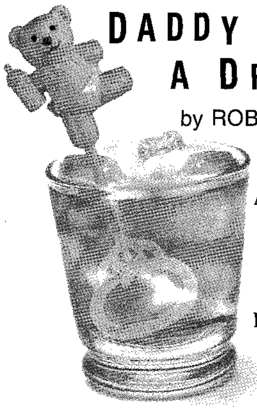
If this were a local-interest story, some square of uplift in the Weitiki *Times*, I'd send down a tremendous avalanche, an S.O.S.—I'd hit that high C, or, in a fluted miracle, the C above it—and somebody below us would see and send help. But that's not what happens. My voice is cracking. It suffers up and fails and surges again. It breaks aeons before the ice ever will. Now I'm breathless and covered in freezing spittle. Rangi watches and never even opens his mouth.

I hear myself echoing our choirmaster: "Sing it with me, Rangi! Forget Franz. Forget Digger. It's O.K. to sing now, Rangi. Or scream if you have to, anything. . . ."

Our voices are the only hatchet that we have up here. But Rangi, if you can believe this, has fallen backward into the snow. He's settled into his own snow angel. When I kneel and shake him, he looks up at me with mild surprise, as if he'd forgotten that I was still here. Then his gaze shifts inward. A new shape is running in Rangi's eyes now. A brown-gold speck, at such a distance. Its black snout opens in a soundless, joyful roar.

Somewhere, the Avalanche is about to happen without us. Rangi must know this before I do, and the dead bear in his eyes comes racing toward us across old snow. At the base of Eokeora, Mr. Oamaru is fiddling with a flashbulb, the black drape of the box camera billowing around him. He is snapping picture after picture of white sludge rolling down an ice shelf. My mother is pointing to the ridge where I'm supposed to be and making good-natured jokes about my weight gain. Ruth, Rachel, and Rebecca are sending up a prayer for my success. They'll eat stale Moon Pies and listen for a happy hallucination of my voice. In a few minutes, the town will stand and applaud. I feel as if I were looking down at my own funeral, only nobody knows that I'm dead.

Even so, I can't silence a small chirp of hope. Who knows? Maybe Rangi's transponder hit a ledge during its long fall that jarred the switch back to On. Deep in my pocket, my own transponder is still emitting its tiny signal. A part of me feels certain that my family will hear my absence at the bottom of Eokeora, thousands of feet below us, and know that I am lost. ♦



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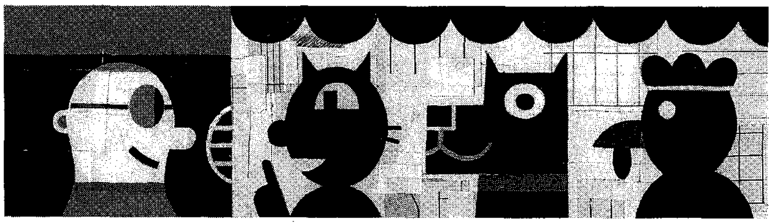


A CRITIC AT LARGE

AMERICAN SUBLIME

Morton Feldman's mysterious musical landscapes.

BY ALEX ROSS

Morton Feldman was a big, brusque Jewish guy from Woodside, Queens—the son of a manufacturer of children's coats. He worked in the family business until he was forty-four years old, and he later became a professor of music at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He died in 1987, at the age of sixty-one. To almost everyone's surprise but his own, he turned out to be one of the major composers of the twentieth century, a sovereign artist who opened up vast, quiet, agonizingly beautiful worlds of sound. He was also one of the greatest talkers in the recent history of New York City, and there is no better way to introduce him than to let him speak for himself:

> Earlier in my life there seemed to be unlimited possibilities, but my mind was closed. Now, years later and with an open mind, possibilities no longer interest me. I seem content to be continually rearranging the same furniture in the same room. My concern at times is nothing more than establishing a series of practical conditions that will enable me to work. For years I said if I could only find a comfortable chair I would rival Mozart.

> My teacher Stefan Wolpe was a Marxist and he felt my music was too esoteric at the time. And he had his studio on a proletarian street, on Fourteenth Street and Sixth Avenue. . . . He was on the second floor and we were looking out the window, and he said, "What about the man on the street?" At that moment . . . Jackson Pollock was crossing the street. The crazy artist of my generation was crossing the street at that moment.

> If a man teaches composition in a university, how can he not be a composer? He has worked hard, learned his craft. Ergo, he is a composer. A professional. Like a doctor. But there is that doctor who opens you up, does exactly the right thing, closes you up—and you die. He failed to take the chance that might have saved you. Art is a crucial, dangerous operation we perform on ourselves. Unless we take a chance, we die in art.

> Just concentrate on not making the lazy move.

> Polyphony sucks.

> Because I'm Jewish, I do not identify with, say, Western civilization music. In other words, when Bach gives us a diminished fourth, I cannot respond that the diminished fourth means, *O God*. . . . What are our morals in music? Our moral in music is nineteenth-century German music, isn't it? I do think about that, and I do think about the fact that I want to be the first great composer that is Jewish.

These quotations are taken from three collections of Feldman's writings, lectures, and interviews: "Morton Feldman Essays," which was published in 1985; "Give My Regards to Eighth Street," which appeared in 2000; and the new anthology "Morton Feldman Says," edited by Chris Villars (Hyphen; $50). The books testify to the composer's rich, compact, egotistical, playful, precise, poetic, and insidiously quotable way with language. The titles of his works make music on their own: "The Viola in My Life," "Madame Press Died Last Week at Ninety," "Routine Investigations," "Coptic Light," "The King of Denmark," "I Met Heine on the Rue Fürstenberg." A champion monologuist, Feldman had an uncanny ability to dominate the most illustrious company. Six feet tall, and weighing nearly three hundred pounds, he was hard to miss. He attended meetings of the Eighth Street Artists' Club, the headquarters of the Abstract Expressionists; he made his presence felt at gatherings of the New York School of poets, dancers, and painters, lavishing sometimes unwanted attention on the women in the room; he both amused and affronted other composers. John Adams told me that he once attended a new-music festival in Valencia, California, and stayed at a tacky motel called the Ranch House Inn. When Adams came down for breakfast, he found various leading personalities of late-twentieth-century music, including Steve Reich, Iannis Xenakis, and Milton Babbitt, sitting with Feldman, who proceeded to talk through the entire meal. "A lovable solipsist," Adams called him.

The often noted paradox is that this immense, verbose man wrote music that seldom rose above a whisper. In the noisiest century in history, Feldman chose to be glacially slow and snowily soft. Chords arrive one after another, in seemingly haphazard sequence, interspersed with silences. Harmonies hover in a no man's land between consonance and dissonance, paradise and oblivion. Rhythms are irregular and overlapping, so that the music floats above the beat. Simple figures repeat for a long time, then disappear. There is no exposition or development of themes, no clear formal structure. Certain later works unfold over extraordinarily lengthy spans of time, straining the capabilities of performers to play them and audiences to hear them. More than a dozen pieces last between one and two hours, and "For Philip Guston" and "String Quartet (II)" go on for much longer. In its ritual stillness, this body of work abandons the syntax of Western music, and performers must set aside their training to do it justice. Legend has it that after one group of players had crept their way as quietly as possible through a score of his Feldman barked, "It's too fuckin' loud, and it's too fuckin' fast."

For a time, it appeared that Feldman would be remembered as one of several experimental composers who were gathered around John Cage. In the past two decades, however, his reputation has steadily ascended, even though his works remain rarities on American concert programs. There are well over a hundred CDs of his music, most of it on intrepid

Feldman, an immense, verbose man, wrote music that seldom rose above a whisper. Photograph by Hans Namuth.

CENTER FOR CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY / HANS NAMUTH ESTATE

small labels such as Hat Art, New Albion, CRI, CPO, and the indispensable Mode Records, which is in the process of issuing parallel editions of Feldman and Cage. According to Villars's meticulous online discography, all but a handful of Feldman's hundred and forty published works can be found on CD, and some have been recorded many times; ten pianists have essayed the ninety-minute "Triadic Memories." The music has found an audience not only among new-music connoisseurs but also among adventurous fans of rock and pop, who are quick to respond to its unearthly power. In a 1982 lecture that is reprinted in "Morton Feldman Says," the composer asks, "Do we have anything in music for example that really wipes everything out? That just cleans everything away?" If we didn't before, we do now.

Feldman, whose parents came to America from Kiev, grew up in the cosmopolitan New York of the nineteen-thirties and forties, when Fiorello La-Guardia championed high art for the working man and émigré European artists crowded the streets. Feldman studied piano with Vera Maurina Press, a legendary pedagogue who had been a pupil of Ferruccio Busoni. (She is the "Madame Press" who "Died Last Week at Ninety.") His first composition teacher was Wallingford Riegger, one of the earliest American followers of Arnold Schoenberg. He went on to study with Stefan Wolpe, who, just a few years earlier, had been agitating against the Nazis in Berlin. Young Morty also had several long talks with the expatriate ultra-modernist Edgard Varèse. When you write, Varèse would tell him, think about how long it takes for the sound to travel to the back of the hall. Feldman's student efforts, which are now showing up on recordings on the Mode and Ogre-Ogress labels, emulate Schoenberg and

INFORMATION
PATTERSON

"Boy, are we glad to see you."

• •

Bartók, but there is already something unusual in the arrangement of events; as per Varèse's instruction, Feldman lets loose a striking chord and then lets it reverberate in the listener's mind.

The crux of Feldman's development came in 1950, when he entered the world of John Cage. The odd couple of the musical avant-garde—the gay, gaunt, Anglo-Saxon Californian and the straight, burly, Russian-Jewish New Yorker—met one night at Carnegie Hall, where they had both gone to hear Dimitri Mitropoulos conduct Anton Webern's twelve-tone Symphony. Rachmaninoff's "Symphonic Dances" was next on the program, and both men walked out early, to avoid having their modernist spell disrupted by Rachmaninoff's romanticism. As their paths intersected, Feldman asked, "Wasn't that beautiful?" And a friendship was born. Feldman visited Cage in his tenement apartment at the corner of Monroe and Grand Streets, where the East River Houses are now. The kid from Queens gazed in wonder at Cage's austere bohemian décor: the Lippold mobiles, the straw mat on the bare floor, the drafting table with the fluorescent lamp and Rapidograph pens. He soon moved in downstairs. By day, he worked at his father's coat company in Queens and part time at his uncle's dry-cleaning business. By night, he consorted with Cage's remarkable network of artistic acquaintances, the painters and the poets and the artists without portfolio. The painters attracted Feldman the most, and the interest was mutual. Pollock asked him to write music for the famous Hans Namuth documentary about the drip-painting process. Philip Guston immortalized Feldman in a portrait that depicts him with a cigarette jutting from his mouth. "What was great about the fifties," Feldman later said, "is that for one brief moment—maybe, say, six weeks—nobody understood art."

Cage, in 1950, was turning music upside down. He had written works using found-object percussion, "prepared" pianos, turntables, and other gizmos. Soon to come were tape and radio collages, compositions using chance procedures, multimedia happenings, and "4' 33"," the legendary silent piece. But it wasn't the particulars of Cage's innovations that affected Feldman; gizmos bored him, and he almost always composed for ordinary instruments, to be played in a more or less ordinary way. What floored Feldman was the unswerving unconventionality of Cage's mind. He now had permission to drop all inherited habits—to become himself. "I owe him everything and I owe him nothing," Feldman said. In later years, they had some strong disagreements; Cage would talk about Feldman's sensuous appeal, which, in his mind, was a problem. In one of history's more obtuse putdowns, he declared that Feldman's music was closer "to what we know is beautiful" whereas his own was "closer to what we know is ugly." Yet the two retained a fraternal bond.

Not long after meeting Cage, Feldman opened up his own compositional Pandora's box, in the form of "graphic notation," which did away with the routine of writing notes on staves. One day at Cage's apartment, Feldman produced the first of a series of pieces titled "Projections," whose score consisted of a grid of boxes. The player was invited to choose notes within the boxes, which represented high, middle, and low ranges. A subsequent series of works, which began appearing in 1957, specified pitches but allowed the performer to decide when and how long they should be played. These conceptual approaches quickly became part of international avant-garde practice, as did Feldman's habit of using numbered abstractions as titles. Soon enough, composers were filling their scores with patterns, pictures, and verbal instructions, and matters progressed to the logical extreme of Cage's "Theatre Piece" (1960), during which a piano was slapped with a dead fish. But Feldman had no taste for anarchy. When he realized that his notation could lead to a circus atmosphere—when Leonard Bernstein conducted his music with the New York Philharmonic in 1964, the orchestra joined the audience in hissing him—he turned in another direction. The idea was simply to free music from the machinery of process. Performed in the right spirit, the graphic works sound like the murmur of a crowd in a temple.

All the while, Feldman continued to write in traditional notation as well. In pieces entitled "Intermissions" and "Extensions," he laid out the fundamentals of his aesthetic, which he once defined as vibrating stasis. The sound owed a great deal to the old atonal masters, the Viennese triumvirate of Schoenberg, Berg, and Webern, especially in their dreamier, eerier moods; Feldman's music is inconceivable without the precedent of the "Colors" movement of Schoenberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra, with its rotating transpositions of one muted chord, or the funeral march of Webern's Six Pieces for Orchestra, with its misty layers of winds and brass over drum rolls. What Feldman did was to slow the pace of events in the Schoenbergian universe. Schoenberg was, above all, an impatient man, who had to keep scurrying on to the next novel combination of sounds. Feldman was patient. He let each chord say what it had to say. He breathed. Then he moved on to the next. His textures were daringly spare. On one page of "Extensions 3," he used a mere fifty-seven notes in forty bars, or fewer than two per bar. In confining himself to a minimum of material, Feldman discovered the expressive power of the space around the notes. The sounds animate the surrounding silence.

The example of the painters was crucial. Feldman's scores were close in spirit to Rauschenberg's all-white and all-black canvases, Barnett Newman's gleaming lines, and, especially, Rothko's glowing fog banks of color. His habit of presenting the same figure many times in succession invites you to hear music as a gallery visitor sees paintings; you can study the sound from various angles, stand back or move up close, go away and come back for a second look. Feldman said that New York painting led him to attempt a music "more direct, more immediate, more physical than anything that had existed heretofore." Just as the Abstract Expressionists wanted viewers to focus on paint itself, on its texture and pigment, Feldman wanted listeners to absorb the basic facts of resonant sound. At a time when composers were frantically trying out new systems and languages, Feldman chose to follow his intuition. He had an amazing ear for harmony, for ambiguous collections of notes that tease the brain with never-to-be-fulfilled expectations. Wilfrid Mellers, in his book "Music in a New Found Land," eloquently summed up Feldman's early style: "Music seems to have vanished almost to the point of extinction; yet the little that is left is, like all of Feldman's work, of exquisite musicality; and it certainly presents the American obsession with emptiness completely absolved from fear." In other words, we are in the region of Wallace Stevens's "American Sublime," of the "empty spirit/In vacant space."

Working nine to five in the garment business, Feldman proudly maintained his independence from the professional herd. He mocked the university composers who tailored their work for fellow-analysts, the tonal composers who tried to please orchestra audiences, the inventor-composers who unveiled brand-new isms each summer at the state-funded European festivals. "Innovations be damned," he snapped. "It's a boring century." In 1972, he obtained his post at SUNY Buffalo, but he continued to insist that composition could not be taught, that it should not be professionalized. He loved to challenge students' assumptions about what ideas were au courant, about which composers were radical and which were conservative. He proclaimed, for example, a love for Sibelius, who had long been derided in progressive circles as a retrograde Romantic. When I visited the small archive of Feldman papers at SUNY Buffalo, I came across an exam paper in which the composer asked his students to analyze Sibelius's Fifth Symphony alongside Webern's Concerto Opus 24. How the would-be revolutionaries of the day must have scratched their heads over that! Another assignment was to write a piece for soprano and string quartet, using a text from the Buffalo *Evening News*.

Feldman's works of the seventies were less aggressively strange than those of the fifties and sixties. He sought out warmer, simpler chords, bewitching fragments of melody. Music of this period—the viola-and-ensemble cycle "The Viola in My Life"; a series of concertolike pieces for cello, piano, oboe, and flute; the choral masterwork "Rothko Chapel"—provides a good introduction to a sometimes forbidding sound-world. ("Rothko Chapel" has been recorded immaculately on the New Albion label; for "The Viola in My Life," wait for an ECM CD next year.) In 1977, Feldman ventured to write an hour-long opera entitled "Neither," which was destined never to make it to the Met. The libretto was by Samuel Beckett, who had identified Feldman as a kindred spirit, and it consisted of an eighty-seven-word poem that offered no setting, no characters, and no plot, but still the faint assurance of an "unspeakable home."

In his last years, from 1979 until 1987, Feldman again swerved away from the mainstream. He inaugurated his compositions of long duration, those which went on for an hour or more. Even the most devoted fans may wish to admit that there was an element of runaway grandiosity in these Wagnerian demands on the listener's time. Feldman plotted his immortality with some deliberation—this was the man who intended to become the first great Jewish composer, ruling out Mendelssohn, Mahler, and Schoenberg—and he evidently saw this series of pieces as his tour de force, his run for home. ("I'm on third base," he boasted in 1982.) Yet there was also a practical need for a drastic enlargement of scale. It allowed his quiet voice to be heard in the total isolation that it required. Feldman's shorter works make an awkward effect on standard concert programs, particularly when the audience coughs and rustles its puzzlement aloud; they don't play well with others. The long works create an overarching, protective space around a vulnerable huddle of sounds. The composer Kyle Gann, in his brilliant new book, "Music Downtown" (California; $19.95), describes how you end up living with Feldman's music as you would with a painting on your wall.

Extreme length allowed Feldman to approach his ultimate goal of making music into an experience of life-changing force, a transcendent art form that wipes everything else away. To sit through performances of the two biggest works—I heard Petr Kotik's S.E.M. Ensemble play the five-hour-long "For Philip Guston" in 1995, with phenomenal purity of tone, and the Flux Quartet play the six-hour-long "String Quartet (II)" in 1999, with tireless focus—is to enter into a new way of listening, even a new consciousness. There are passages in each where Feldman seems to be testing the listener's patience, seeing how long we can endure a repeated note or a dissonant minor second. Then, out of nowhere, some very pure, almost childlike idea materializes. Most of the closing section of "For Philip Guston" is in modal A minor, and it is music of surpassing gentleness and tenderness. But it inhabits a far-off, secret place that few travellers will stumble upon.

In his last years, Feldman became unexpectedly wealthy. He inherited some money from his family, and he received increasing royalties from Europe, where his music was always better understood. Most significantly, he made a small fortune by selling art. Back in the fifties, he had bought a Rauschenberg canvas for seventeen dollars, because that was what he had in his pocket at the time. Shortly before his death, he sold it for six hundred thousand dollars. He became a collector of antique Middle Eastern rugs, whose subtly varied patterns affected his late style. Curmudgeonly and generous by turns, he picked up dinner tabs for hungry young composers. His final works radiate an enormous, ominous serenity: "Piano and String Quartet" (which Aki Takahashi has recorded beautifully with the Kronos Quartet, on Nonesuch), "Palais de Mari," for piano (played by Takahashi on her mesmerizing Mode CD of early and late piano music), and "Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello" (recorded with icy clarity by the Ives Ensemble, on Hat Art). That piece, the very last, makes repeated, wistful references to Debussy's Prelude "Des Pas sur la Neige," or "Steps in the Snow." Pancreatic cancer took Feldman quickly. One day, he was unavoidably there, monopolizing the room; the next, he was gone.

There is no mistaking the lonely, lamenting tone that runs through Feldman's music. From time to time, the composer hinted that the horrors of the twentieth century, and in particular the Holocaust, had made other, more ornate kinds of musical expression impossible for him. He explained that the title "The King of Denmark," which he bestowed on a graphic piece for percussion, was inspired by King Christian X, who was occupying the Danish throne when the Germans invaded his country in 1940. Feldman proceeded to tell the story, now considered apocryphal, of King Christian responding to German anti-Semitism by walking the streets with a yellow star pinned to his chest. It was a "silent protest," Feldman said. In a way, his music seemed to protest all of European civilization, which, in one way or another, had been complicit in Hitler's crimes. The American composer Alvin Curran once saw Feldman at a German festival, and asked him, in light of the enthusiasm that he was inspiring there, why he didn't move to Germany. Feldman stopped in the middle of the street, pointed down at the cobblestones, and said, "Can't you hear them? They're screaming! Still screaming out from under the pavements!"

If there is a Holocaust memorial in Feldman's work, it is "Rothko Chapel," which was written in 1971, for Rothko's octagonal array of paintings in Houston. Rothko had committed suicide the previous year, and Feldman, who had become his close friend, responded with his most personal, affecting work. It is scored for viola, solo soprano, chorus, percussion, and celesta. There are voices, but no words. As is so often the case in Feldman's music, chords and melodic fragments hover like shrouded forms, surrounded by thick silence. The viola offers wide-ranging, rising-and-falling phrases. The drums roll and tap at the edge of audibility. Celesta and vibraphone chime gentle clusters. There are fleeting echoes of past music, as when the chorus sings distant, dissonant chords reminiscent of the voice of God in Schoenberg's "Moses und Aron," or when the soprano sings a thin, quasi-tonal melody that echoes the vocal lines of Stravinsky's final masterpiece, the "Requiem Canticles." That passage was written on the day of Stravinsky's funeral, in April, 1971—another thread of lament in the pattern. But the emotional sphere of "Rothko Chapel" is too vast to be considered a memorial for an individual, whether it is Rothko or Stravinsky.

Shortly before the end, something astonishing happens. The viola begins to play a keening, minor-key, modal song, redolent of the synagogue. Feldman had written this music decades earlier, during the Second World War, when he was attending the High School of Music and Art, in New York. Underneath it, celesta and vibraphone play a murmuring four-note pattern, which calls to mind a figure in Stravinsky's "Symphony of Psalms." The song unfurls twice, and the chorus answers with the chords of God. The allusions suggest that Feldman is creating a divine music, appropriate to the sombre spirituality of Rothko's chapel. In a sense, he is fusing two different divinities, representative of two major strains in twentieth-century music: the remote, Hebraic God of Schoenberg's opera, and the luminous, iconic presence of Stravinsky's symphony. Finally, there is the possibility that the melody itself, that sweet, sad, Jewish-sounding tune, speaks for those whom Feldman heard beneath the cobblestones of German towns. It might be the chant of millions in a single voice.

But I can almost hear Feldman speaking out against this too specific reading. At a seminar in Germany in 1972, he was asked whether his music had any relationship to the Holocaust, and he said no. He was a hardcore avant-gardist to the end, despite his sensualist tendencies, and he would not freely admit to any such sentimentality. It was probably in reaction to the communicative power of "Rothko Chapel" that he later dismissed it, unbelievably, as a minor work. But in that German seminar he did say, in sentences punctuated by long pauses, "There's an aspect of my attitude about being a composer that is like mourning. Say, for example, the death of art . . . something that has to do with, say, Schubert leaving me." He also admitted, "I must say, you did bring up something that I particularly don't want to talk about publicly, but I do talk privately."

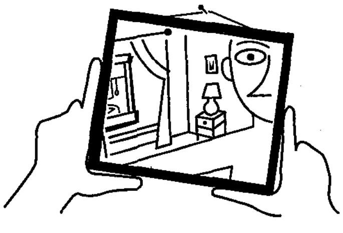
Only this one time, in the last minutes of "Rothko Chapel," did Feldman allow himself the consolation of an ordinary melody. Otherwise, he held the outside world at bay. Yet he always showed an awareness of other possibilities, a sympathy for all that he chose to reject. Listening to his music is like being in a room with the curtains drawn. You sense that with one quick gesture sunlight could fill the room, that life in all its richness could come flooding in. But the curtains stay closed. A shadow moves across the wall. And Feldman sits in his comfortable chair. ♦

BRIEFLY NOTED

Short Stories

Now You See It . . ., *by Bathsheba Monk (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $22).* Monk, who grew up in Pennsylvania coal-and-steel country, sets her stories in the fictional town of Cokesville, where gardens grow through slag heaps, women scrub their sidewalks free of soot, and men scrounge for jobs that are likely to kill or maim. Set mostly among Polish immigrants and their descendants over a forty-year period, the stories use deadpan humor to combat a sense of hopelessness and economic futility. The most compelling are narrated by an adolescent would-be writer determined to avoid the "lava show" make-out spot, where carts dump molten coke and girls her age get pregnant. Even those who escape, however, can't seem to free themselves from the slow burn of their heritage, much like a decades-old underground coal fire, ignited "when someone dumped a load of garbage down a mine shaft."

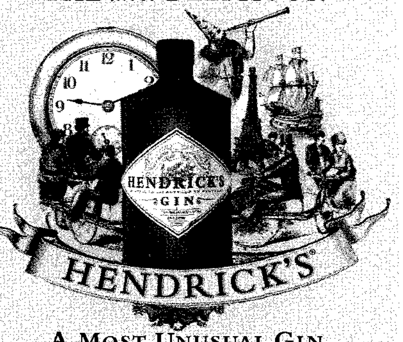
The Gentle Order of Girls and Boys, *by Dao Strom (Counterpoint; $24).* Strom's second collection explores the lives of four Vietnamese-American women through their interactions with men. The book is informed by the Vietnamese immigrations of the nineteen-seventies but is filled with social observation of contemporary middle-class culture and indie sensibility. A film student observes that her friend is not "the first disgruntled, slightly sexually embittered male in his twenties" to identify with Travis Bickle, then silently wishes that he would "close himself—save face." A professional party girl from Ho Chi Minh City who has married a rich Texan secretly prefers the clean uniformity of a nearby housing development that her husband hates. A free-spirited young mother senses some indistinct but imminent blessing that makes her float through her cocktail-waitressing job "feeling so *sharp* . . . lucid and empowered." Quietly beautiful, Strom's stories are hip without being ironic.



The Unfinished Novel, *by Valerie Martin (Vintage; $13).* In these sly, canny stories about artists and those who are drawn to them, Martin explores the occupational hazards of the creative process. Often, a celebrated painter, writer, or actor is seen through the eyes of an only moderately successful peer or those of a soon-to-be-former lover, with subtle shifts in perspective altering the emotional composition. There is a spareness to Martin's narrative style, but her judicious use of details (such as the red lipstick of a distraught dancer contrasting with the dark circles under her eyes) brings her characters into sharp relief. The narrative dilemmas posed by the stories might seem contrived, but the cool assurance of Martin's voice, and her capacity to say surprising things about ordinary feelings—envy, rage, and despair figure prominently—makes the collection a triumph.

Voices of Time, *by Eduardo Galeano, translated from the Spanish by Mark Fried (Metropolitan; $25).* This Uruguayan writer has a way of producing stories reminiscent of folktales, testimonials, and reflections, and of stitching them together into vast historical tapestries, a technique seen to greatest effect in his trilogy "Memory of Fire." The current collection, subtitled "A Life in Stories," includes excursions into the Mayan concept of time, Peruvian cave paintings, and child laborers in Pakistan, and features walk-on appearances by Hernán Cortés, Diego Maradona, and Michael Jackson. Galeano can be fierce and defiant, as when he inveighs against the I.M.F., the World Bank, and assorted dictators, but there is always something celebratory to his style. Evoking the call of poets and singers, and the mysterious voices of wind, moon, trees, and dreams, Galeano remains, first and foremost, a wonder-struck raconteur.

The ODDEST MOMENTS ARE THE *most* DELICIOUS.



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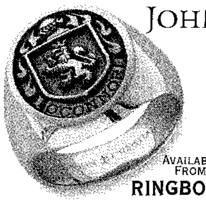

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THE ART WORLD

SPANISH LESSONS

Picasso in Madrid.

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

Pablo Picasso is having a tough summer in Madrid. He can handle it, though with nothing like his usual insolent panache—you can feel him sweat. The occasion—"Picasso: Tradition and Avant-Garde," a double exhibition at the glorious Prado and at the Reina Sofía, the desultory national modern-art museum—is purely celebratory in intent, marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of the patriation of "Guernica," after, at the artist's behest, it had waited out in New York the dictatorship of Francisco Franco. The mood is implicitly nationalist, embracing a man who, in 1936, was named the director of the Prado, in absentia, by the republican government, but who never lived in his native land after 1904. (He liked to boast, "All these artists finally belonged to me.") The shows just happen to put Picasso's greatness to severe, vivid tests. By general agreement, he was the best artist of the twentieth century. How good was that? His sheer significance, as the god of modernity in painting, has always beggared ultimate judgment. Now the issue is being forced, at the Prado and the Reina Sofía, by direct comparisons of his work with that of the Old Masters who, from time to time, were important to him, either as models or as goads—notably Velázquez and Goya. The results probe Picasso's artistic weaknesses—he had some—and give focus to doubts about the quality of the monumental egotist's one major painted political statement, created in response to the German bombing of a Basque town, in 1937.

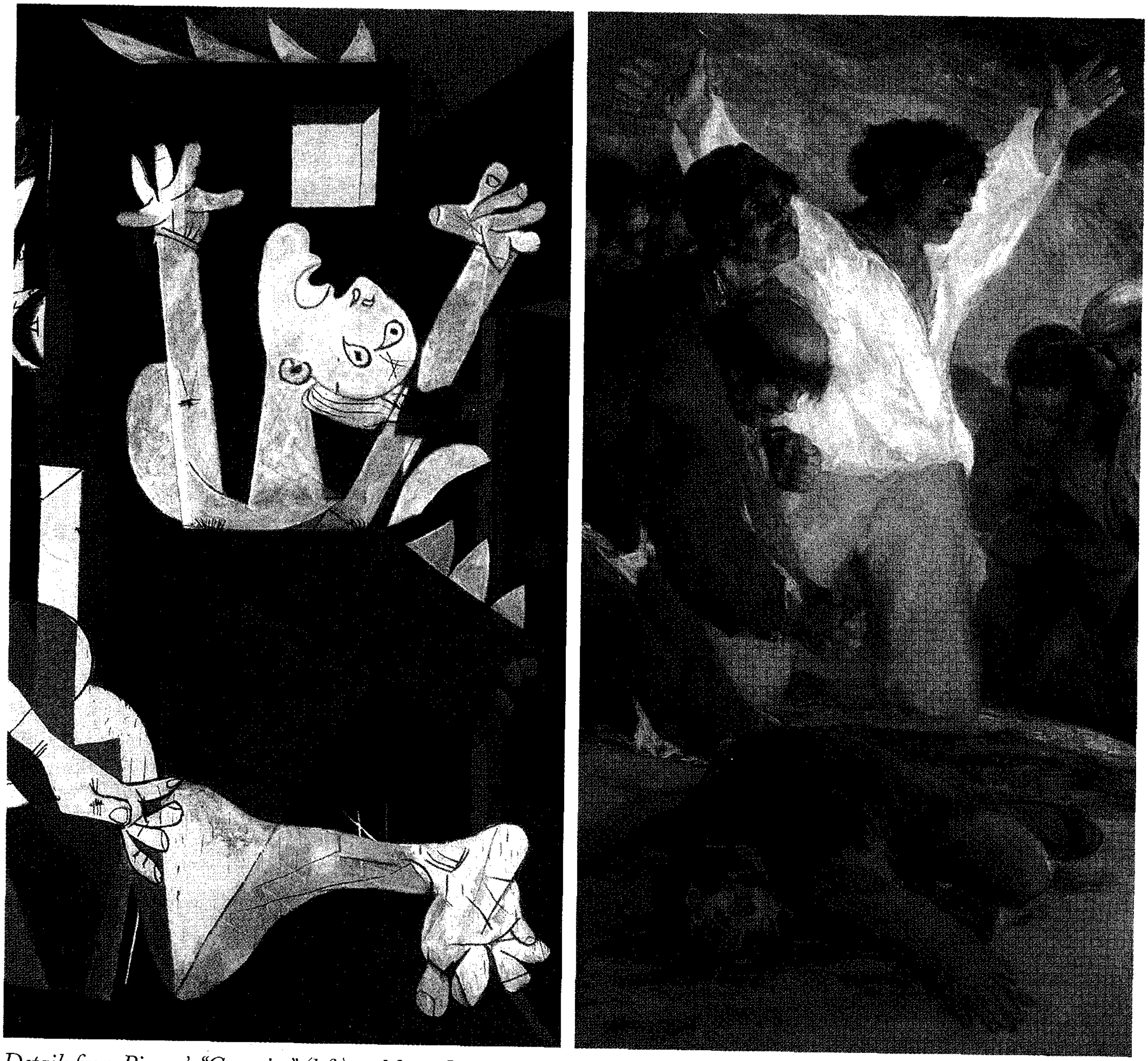
At the Prado, a compact retrospective of about forty borrowed Picassos, in chronological array—from precocious sketches, after Velázquez, that he made at the museum in 1897-98, while still a teen-ager, to a bravura canvas, "Musketeer and Love," from 1969, four years before his death—are interspersed with germane works from the museum's incredible permanent collection. "La Vie" (1903) and "Boy Leading a Horse" (1906) grapple with El Grecos, and "Self-Portrait with Palette" (1906) and two Cubist portraits face off against a Poussin and a Ribera. The determinedly ugly "The Serenade" (1942)—a contorted musician plays for a grotesque reclining nude—confronts one of its likely Renaissance inspirations (or targets), Titian's gorgeous "Venus and the Organ Player." The selection of Picassos is strong but might have been made stronger, with, say, "Portrait of Gertrude Stein" (1906) and "Harlequin" (1915), in place of lesser works. As it is, Velázquez's "The Triumph of Bacchus" (a sly young god attended by tipsy guys you would recognize in the first low-end bar down your street) runs rings around Picasso's classicizing portrait of his son Paulo as a Harlequin (1924) and even the great "Three Musicians" (1921), whose deftly interlocking planes suddenly seem so much empty trickery. Seen through an archway into the museum's main hall, "Las Meninas" craves congress with "Les Demoiselles d'Avignon" (1907), but, instead, the greatest of paintings must abide Picasso's Velázquez pastiches of 1957—bagatelles in which he seems less an arch parodist than an abject buffoon. Other Old Masters on hand include Rubens (his copy of Titian's "Rape of Europa," which amounts to a collaboration that is beautiful beyond measure), Veronese, Zurbarán, and Goya ("The Naked Maja").

The Reina Sofía concentrates on "Guernica," which has resided immovably at the museum since 1992, supplementing it with related drawings, and with two of its three most formidable rivals (David's "Death of Marat" is the missing third) as paintings of political violence—Goya's "The Third of May 1808 in Madrid: The Executions on Príncipe Pío" (1814), from the Prado, and Manet's "The Execution of Emperor Maximilian" (1868-69), the complete version, from Mannheim.

Mano a mano, Picasso stands up brilliantly to Ribera, Zurbarán, and Poussin, suggesting that the attention to stark fact in the first two, and the rational method of the third, were historic steps in Picasso's direction. The proximity of blue- and pink-period pictures to El Greco's grandiose "Trinity" confirms a familial affinity that is often remarked on. Picasso was excited by El Greco's vertiginous formal inventions, and he dismissed the earlier painter's religiosity as one would a revered brother's harmless crotchets. (But questions of belief haunt the show. Picasso had faith only in himself, which makes him both heroically modern and, in his present company, a figure of relatively wizened, sour spirit.) Titian, Rubens, and even Veronese are again another matter, exposing the poverty of Picasso's color. His forte was linear and analytical—hard and dry. He wielded color resourcefully and keenly, to intensify contrasts, but the sensuous eloquence of real colorists, for whom meaning is inseparable from decorative effect, was outside his ken. That's why, rant as he did against the effeminate inferiority of decoration, Picasso could never completely shake off Matisse. And that's why comparing Picasso with Velázquez reinforces the latter's preëminence. Velázquez has no discernible limits in any capacity of his art. He is Picasso plus Matisse—adept at blacks and grays as plangent as Matisse's reds and blues.

Picasso's smartest decision in "Guernica," a consummate feat of pictorial intelligence, was to limit its palette to black-and-white. He thereby forged his chief handicap into a thematic weapon, inferring that war is no time for indulgence and, by evoking the look of a newspaper, factored in the modern experience of comprehending catastrophe (and of inflicting it) at a distance. Proto-Pop, the trope anticipates the use of grainy tabloid photos in Andy Warhol's "Disaster" series. Other aspects of the work are less persuasive. There is the question of temperament. Do we believe an identification with victims of cruelty from a man who, in small ways, enjoyed being cruel? His many pictures, from the same time, of Dora Maar weeping are poignant enough. But who

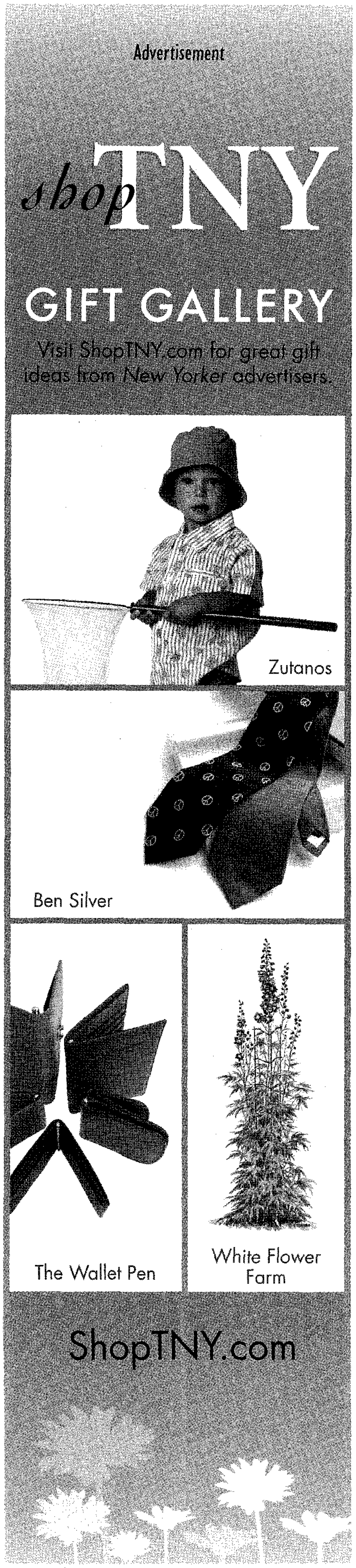
COURTESY MUSEO NACIONAL CENTRO DE ARTE REINA SOFÍA, MADRID/COURTESY MUSEO NACIONAL DEL PRADO, MADRID



Details from Picasso's "Guernica" (left) and from Goya's "The Third of May 1808 in Madrid: The Executions on Príncipe Pío."

made her cry? ("Women are machines for suffering," he once remarked.) Most gravely, in terms of rhetoric, the representations of carnage—a screaming woman, a limp baby, a severed arm clutching a sword—are ingenious but remote, instantly generic emblems. "Guernica" is more impressive as graphic design—a gigantic poster, complex but firmly knitted and legible at a glance—than as symbolic expression. It is a cartoon about atrocity in the abstract. The one emotion that burns through is the artist's controlled anger. Picasso couldn't help making this picture, like all his others, be about himself.

There is, however, no gainsaying the unquenchable authority of "Guernica" as an icon, especially in Spain. Its arrival there, in 1981, heralded a national liberalization, whose fragility was made apparent by the painting's initial display, in a building near the Prado, flanked by vigilant soldiers of the Guardia Civil, inside a cage of bulletproof glass. ("Guernica" still sparks conflict: the first questioner at a press conference for this show asked when the painting would be coming to the Basque region, to which the Reina Sofía director answered, in essence, "Never.") At the Reina Sofía, you can now get quite close to the bare surface of the vast canvas (more than twenty-five feet long by more than eleven high) before a rope intervenes and, should you lean forward over it, as I did, a discreet alarm sounds. But it's impossible not to feel that an invisible envelope of practically religious passion, a collective emanation of generations of viewers, shields the mural. Simply, no other work of a bloody century so successfully—that is, to a lesser degree of failure—apostrophizes the character of total war. If the emotionally devastating Goya and even the eerily detached Manet are far superior in conjuring lived horror, with flowing blood and choking gun smoke, it's because they belonged to times when organized violence could still be convincingly registered in specific detail, at human scale, and painting had not yet lost its grip on external reality to photography and on historical fiction to the movies. How good was Picasso? The best anyone could be then, and unlikely to be equalled anytime soon. ♦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THE THEATRE

BLOOD UNDER THE BRIDGE

The lost world of Neil LaBute.

BY JOHN LAHR

"I've got a little list—I've got a little list," Ko-Ko, the Lord High Executioner in "The Mikado," sings. "Of society offenders who might well be underground." To the annals of perverse theatrical list-makers we must now add Guy, the successful thirty-something writer in Neil LaBute's "Some Girl(s)" (well directed by Jo Bonney at the Lucille Lortel). Guy (Eric McCormack) has an outrageous little list of his own, a list of emotional, rather than political, subversives: the badly treated ex-girlfriends with whom he is apparently compelled to make amends before embarking on his marriage, to a twenty-two-year-old nursing student. "Do a check-in, you know?" he explains to Tyler, the friskiest and most thick-skinned of his old flames. "Get caught up to date with 'em, make sure that we are, you know: no harm, no foul." In Guy's eyes, the junket is an act of good faith, a "little bit of windmill tilting." From where the audience sits, however, it gradually becomes a spectacular exhibition of bad faith. We pose the same questions as Guy's former girlfriends: Why now? What is this really about? As it turns out, despite his protestations of good will and the gush of his bonhomie, Guy is toxic. No contemporary American playwright is more brilliant than LaBute at dramatizing mankind's passion for ignorance. "Some Girl(s)" is yet another astute demonstration of his uncanny ability to draw pure water from the most poisoned of wells.

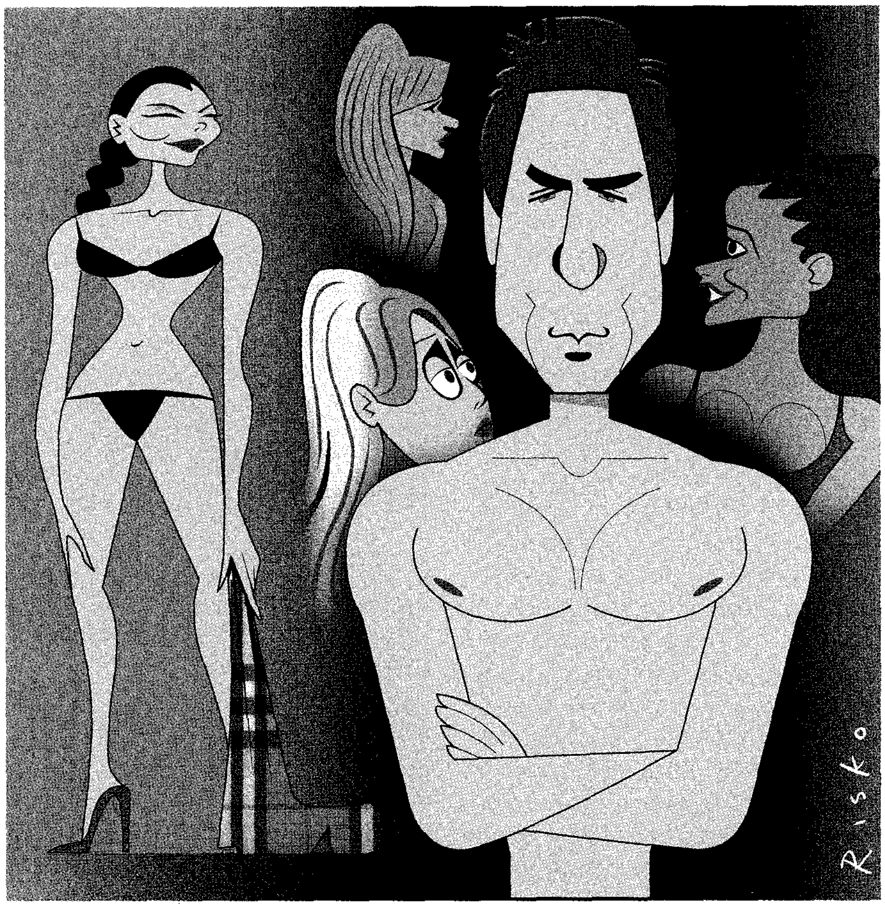
The disingenuous escapade plays out in a series of four look-alike hotel rooms; the cities vary, but the similarity of the spaces is meant to emphasize Guy's psychological predicament—he is everywhere and nowhere. He is stuck. McCormack's Guy is eager and earnest. Unlike David Schwimmer, who played the part in London last year, McCormack doesn't exude a sort of adorable and distracting impishness—his body language isn't the same ironic-comic semaphore of ambivalence. Nonetheless, he is sufficiently winning to make Guy's psychology engaging and his shucking credible.

Guy, who is the author of a story called "The Calculus of Desire," doesn't know what he wants. He is chronically fickle. His romantic life is a never-ending tale of betrayal. In his first encounter, with his provincial high-school sweetheart, Sam (the excellent Brooke Smith), now a housewife, he wonders whether they should share some overpriced cashews from the hotel minibar. "You decide," she says. "Which was never one of your strong suits." In adulthood, you choose, and you lose; maturity brings with it the courage to accept that loss and your part in it. Guy's history of bolting from his relationships without so much as a farewell marks him as a perpetual adolescent. Even though he pays occasional lip service to his bad behavior—"Wow. I suck," he says at one point—he cannot really keep hold of a negative opinion of himself. When he meets Bobbi (Maura Tierney, of "ER," making her New York stage début), a doctor whom he dated for three years before taking up with Tyler, he confesses, "I'd phone you, but then I'd chicken out. I didn't want you to not like me." Bobbi replies, "But you didn't really want me to like you, though, either. True?" Guy wants everything all the time, a state of affairs that his mission of reconciliation and flirtation only underscores. Guy finds it hard to confess his new marital status or even to get his tongue around the concept of commitment. "I've kind of taken this vow-thing here, and I need to stick to it," he tells the brazen Tyler (the appealing Judy Reyes), an artist who has no problem with the idea of extracurricular nooky.

The title of the play refers to Guy's defensive description of his fiancée ("Some girl is all"); the parenthesis extends that brutal detachment to women in general. In the name of making things right with his former lovers, Guy says some annihilating things: Sam learns that, even at eighteen, he felt that she was not on his level ("You ended up almost exactly like I figured you would"); Tyler is made to see that she possessed his body but not his mind ("It's really her I was thinking about"); and when Lindsay (Fran Drescher), a rebarbative older academic, the wife of the university professor who gave Guy his first teaching job, suggests that Guy left her because of her age, he replies, "No. Not just that."

Although Guy sometimes talks, albeit vaguely, about his feelings—"I dunno . . . a kind of faint memory of hurting. Of me hurting or being hurt or . . . I dunno," he says—he is sensationally cut off from himself. He can't imagine the suffering he causes because he can't imagine other people. His ex-girlfriends have a lot of hard things to tell him, too, and they don't spare him. "I think you're the kind of person who leaves a bunch of hurt in your boyish wake . . . all the time," Lindsay says. "I'll bet 'hurt' is your number one by-product." Guy acknowledges the truth of the accusations, but he doesn't really hear them; his defenses scramble the signal of any indictment. Guy cauterizes himself against pain, in large part through language, a sort of semantic jujitsu that obfuscates his emotional reality and keeps him firmly within the parameters of his own narrative. ("You can talk yourself into anything if you say it often enough," Tyler tells him.) LaBute has fun with Guy's weasel words: the insinuating analogies ("This is a sort of 'Pilgrim's Progress' for me"), the strategic deployment of evasive plural pronouns ("The reason we broke up back then—" he says to Sam, whose hurt at having been jilted is still very much alive. Sam stops him. "It wasn't a *we* thing. 'We' was when we were a couple . . . but the finishing it off part. That was *you*"), and especially the suppositional verbs he attaches to his avowed desire for reparation. Lindsay calls him on this linguistic jive. " 'You want to' or 'you're going to'? . . . Because I don't want you to try, it only works if you do it." She adds, "It was the promise of a future. . . . That's what I was in love with. . . . The tomorrows that you kept offering me." When Guy tries to excuse himself to Bobbi—"I always meant well," he says—she replies, "Oppenheimer meant well. Pol Pot meant well. It's not about the meaning, it's about the doing."

Among the many things that Guy has been doing on his adventure, it turns out, is gathering material for his next book. He stole the stove, and now he has come back for the smoke. Bobbi castigates him as an "emotional terrorist," but the term isn't quite right for Guy's particular kind of aggrandizement. He is more of a psychological imperialist; he wants both exploitation and allegiance. "Fine, yes, I sometimes use the people around me to further my career. Well, Bobbi, that makes me an 'American,' " he says, confessing that he found his literary voice through his "romantic foibles." He adds, "Now, just because I'm an author doesn't mean I'm not able to have human . . . *stuff*." Of course, LaBute, in the fierce free-for-all of his dialogue, is demonstrating just the opposite. Guy exhibits a deep-seated misogyny that he cannot see in himself but cannot help making visible to others. LaBute is the only one of his playwriting peers to fully understand and dramatize this psychological fillip, which is why his plays are so complex and unnerving. At the finale, Guy finds himself alone in his hotel room with his intolerable humiliation. His cell phone rings, as it has done many times in the course of the evening. Every other time, Guy has checked the phone but refused to answer it; the ringing has been a mystery, but also a metaphor—Guy is literally and metaphorically unreachable. Now, however, he answers it. Ever the emotional con man, he passes on his emptiness, returning immediately to the platitudes of seduction. "I love you too. . . . I do, honey, very very much . . . and always will. . . . Yes. I promise. Will always and always and, yes, always," he coos as the lights fade. He has learned nothing. He has felt nothing. He is connected to nothing. He is forever in the chilling hell of the future tense. ♦



Eric McCormack as the anti-ladies' man in "Some Girl(s)."

ROBERT RISKO

CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

From the Walden (Colo.) Jackson County Star.

On Aug. 9, a gate was left open along Highway 14 west of Walden and several head of cattle left a perfectly good pasture with some of the lushest grass in years to go stand on asphalt. Their owner was notified.

THE CURRENT CINEMA

ENGINE TROUBLE

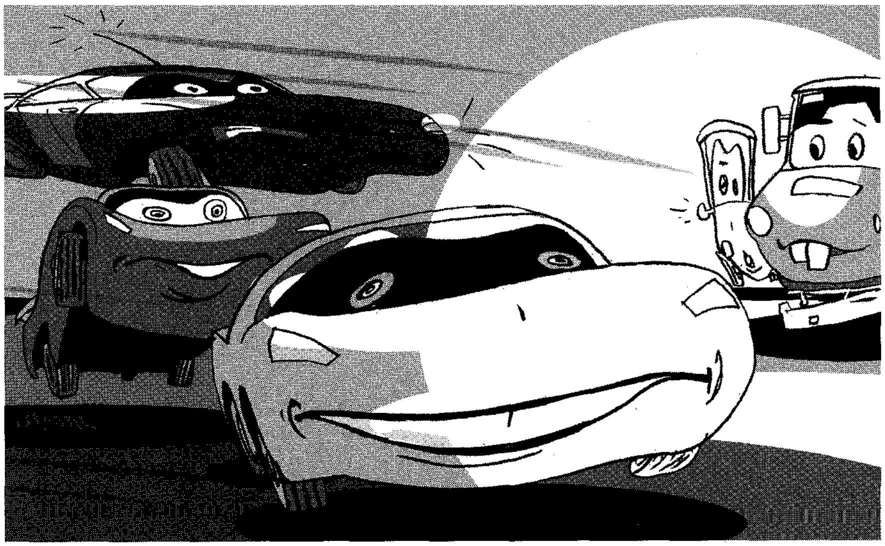
"Cars" and "Lower City."

BY ANTHONY LANE

If movie studios run on a blend of gamble and caution, then Pixar has been one of the few, in recent years, to get the mixture right. The aesthetic dazzle of "Toy Story" and "Monsters, Inc." was, in a way, the pure product of economic sense; given the digital care that is lavished on a single image, and the intrinsic difficulty of persuading a large green furry biped to come back for re-shoots, you might as well take the time, and the trouble, to get your gags running smoothly before the filming starts. In the case of "Cars," the latest Pixar project, three thousand computers toiled away without coffee breaks, and the average frame is said to have required seventeen hours to complete. Not even Marilyn Monroe needed that long. As for the game plan behind "Cars," my guess is that it went something like this: take "Days of Thunder," crash it into the rear of "My Cousin Vinny," set half of it in the landscape of "Stagecoach," and pitch it squarely at the kind of ten-year-old male who locks himself in the bathroom and devours his dad's copy of *Mustang Monthly.*

The plot revolves around a race car called Lightning McQueen—a cocky, flame-red rookie, nicely voiced by Owen Wilson. We start in the midst of a race, the climax of the prestigious Piston Cup, which finds Lightning passing the flag in a three-way tie with his chief rivals. The scene is excitably brisk, as you would expect; the surprise is that everybody here is a car. The television commentators are cars, the whoopers in the crowd are cars, and the cars are cars—all of them anthropomorphized to within an inch of their metal lives. Windshields, rather than headlamps, make do for eyes, radiator grilles for mouths, and—far more awkwardly—wheels become rubbery stumps of limb, useful for nudging open garage doors but not much else.

The trio of winners is invited to contest the Cup once more, a week later, in California. This means traversing the country, or, in Lightning's case, falling out of the back of his transport and finding himself stranded, at night, in the desert scrub. After a string of acrobatic catastrophes, he winds up being arrested in Radiator Springs, a dusty, forgotten town on Route 66, home to a roster of four-wheeled personalities. We get the rusty redneck tow truck, the grouchy local doctor with the fifties bodywork (and the voice of Paul Newman), a blue lady Porsche who seems to have rolled in from another movie, and a handful of squeaky stereotypes—was it strictly necessary for the Italian *and* the Hispanic cars to rave and gibber so loud? The rest of the film is a redemption lesson: our hero discovers the joy of companionship, while verifying the fact that "there's a lot more to racing than winning." This, repeated almost verbatim later on, is a cherished law of sports movies, although if you quoted it to an actual Nascar driver he would laugh heartily and leave tire marks on the back of your head.



The new Pixar plot revolves around a cocky red race car called Lightning McQueen.

ISTVAN BANYAI

If "Cars" is something of a letdown, that is not because of the moral messages that it delivers but because of the heavy hand with which it cranks them out. From the start, Pixar has dealt in friendship, more winningly than it has in the procedures of love, and the new film—directed by John Lasseter, who made the two "Toy Story" pictures—certainly maintains the habit. The problem is that the cars keep spelling it out, saying things like "You're my best friend" or "I trust him," and helping to slide the mood away from the sharp, fractious fun of "The Incredibles" and back toward the sentimental ooze of "Finding Nemo." As Lightning and his buddies start to grease up to one another, rubbing fenders of good will, you are forced to ask: How strong is the basic conceit? Does a car—as opposed to, say, a plastic cowboy—have the pliability that is needed to fashion and refine a character? I had my doubts about insect charisma, in "A Bug's Life," and the shimmer of "Finding Nemo" did little to erase the fact that what swam before us was a bunch of fish—at once the loveliest and the most inexpressive creatures to grace the screen since the heyday of Hedy Lamarr. With automobiles, however, Lasseter may be pushing his luck.

"Cars" is a showcase for every brand of vehicle, from tractor to Ferrari, but something about the grins and snarls feels bolted on. A driverless car, however pretty, is an empty lump—unless, of course, we are talking of demonic possession, as demonstrated by John Carpenter in "Christine," and that kind of menace would be anathema to the happy souls at Pixar. The animation of the inanimate has been a staple from the dancing brooms of "Fantasia" right up to the talking clock in "Beauty and the Beast" and the remote-control car in "Toy Story." In each case, however, these were bit parts, put there to fidget and fuss while the humans, or the humanoids, or the mice got on with their narrative tasks. Now, in "Cars," we have the rise of the machines, and it comes at a peculiar time. With the price of oil gurgling upward, and even the President conceding that the nation's fuel consumption could use a trim, Pixar has produced a hymn to the ecstasy of driving. The entire film dreams woozily of a chrome-bright past, and especially of the glory days of Route 66, when, as we are told, "cars didn't drive on it to make good time—they drove on it to have a good time." Cue a Randy Newman song, one of his weakest, that begins, "Not so very long ago, the world was different, oh yes it was." Along came the interstate, apparently, and ruined everything. Just like that darned Internet, I guess, or that superhighway stuff, or those dumb movies they make with computers nowadays. Oh yes.

For those of us new to the sex trade on the northeastern coast of Brazil, "Lower City" will come as an education. Whole swaths of Sérgio Machado's movie, in fact, are enticingly unfamiliar. When our heroes—a young black guy called Deco (Lázaro Ramos) and his white friend Naldinho (Wagner Moura)—chug downriver to the port of Salvador, delivering goods in their small boat, what to them is an ordinary trip feels to us queasy with foreboding, as perilous as the route pursued by Willard in "Apocalypse Now."

They are accompanied by Karinna (Alice Braga), a hooker who pays her way by sleeping with each man while the other takes the wheel. Machado is careful to present Karinna not as a whore with a heart of gold but as somebody with neither the time nor the space to indulge the needs of her heart. (In her Salvador room, there are cut-out images of Jude Law and Ralph Fiennes glued to the wall; what could be more hopeless, as you turn tricks, than to dream of distant Brits?)

The rhythm of this film is a thing of beauty, quickening from wistful indolence to sudden shudders of action. We get a cockfight, a knifing (repaid with the slash of a broken bottle), and various bouts in the boxing ring, where Deco, once a promising slugger, pulls on the gloves again. Yet we are also offered the casual sight of Karinna painting her toenails outside on a radiant morning, or, even better, the three of them sitting on the dock of the bay, ruminating on their pasts. (Deco and Naldinho have been pals since boyhood.) Karinna, bored by the chatter, jumps into the water, and Naldinho follows suit; but the director, in a moment of inspiration, cuts to the next scene before we can either hear or see the splash. Thus we are left with the most Keatsian of promises: the bliss of the unfulfilled.

That said, the main romantic triangle does come to feel a little musty, not just because it's been done better before—by Truffaut in "Jules et Jim," and recently by Alfonso Cuarón in "Y Tu Mamá También"—but because, once the men's headlong lusts have slowed into jealous love, there really is no place for the story to go, and you can't help siding with Karinna, who looks frankly exhausted by the strain. "I've had it with those two," she says. Each of them, unable to articulate his frustration, expends it in violence—Deco in the ring, Naldinho in a pointless attempt at a drugstore holdup—but the second half of the movie somehow dilutes, rather than distills, our sense of the men's worldly yearnings. In contrast, there is a sustained precision in the film's supporting cast. I liked the local quack with the drink-puffed nose, resigned to being forever underpaid ("Who do you think I am, Mother Teresa?"); the sad captain of a ship, quietly asking Karinna to hit him in the face; and, most sleep-disturbing of all, the boss-eyed madman at the cockfight, plucking a blade from nowhere. Goya would have taken one look and reached for his sketchbook. In the end, "Lower City" is never quite as energetic as it wants to be, touched by the strange, milky lethargy that steeps every waterfront film. What verve it possesses should, I learn from the production notes, be attributed to Kundalini, the special pre-shoot exercise performed by the actors, which "sought to liberate their sexuality by means of pelvic movements." I can see how that might do the trick. ♦

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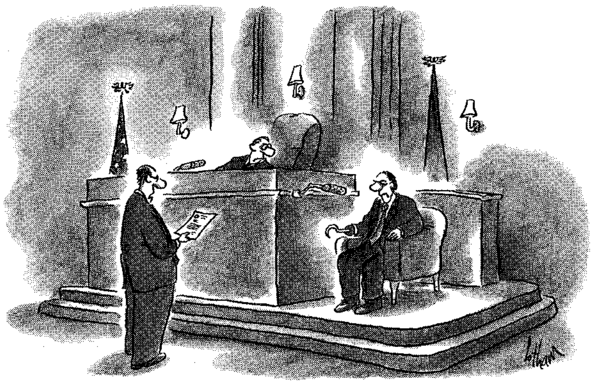
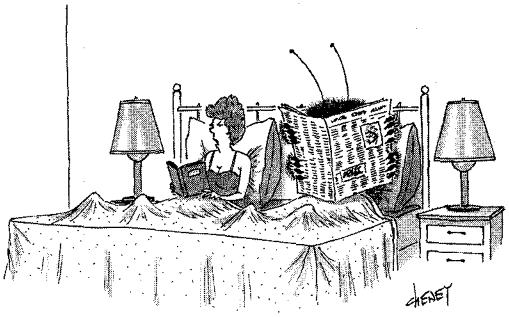
CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

Each week, we provide a cartoon in need of a caption. You, the reader, submit a caption, we choose three finalists, and you vote for your favorite. Caption submissions for this week's cartoon, by Danny Shanahan, must be received by Sunday, June 18th. Finalists in the June 5th contest appear below; go online to vote. We will announce the winner, along with the finalists in this week's contest, in the July 3rd issue. The winner will be given a signed print of the cartoon. Any U.S. resident age eighteen or over can enter or vote. To do so, and to read the complete rules, visit www.newyorker.com/captioncontest.

THE WINNING CAPTION



"Can you please identify which hand was mistakenly amputated?"
Hilary Phillips, Washington, D.C.



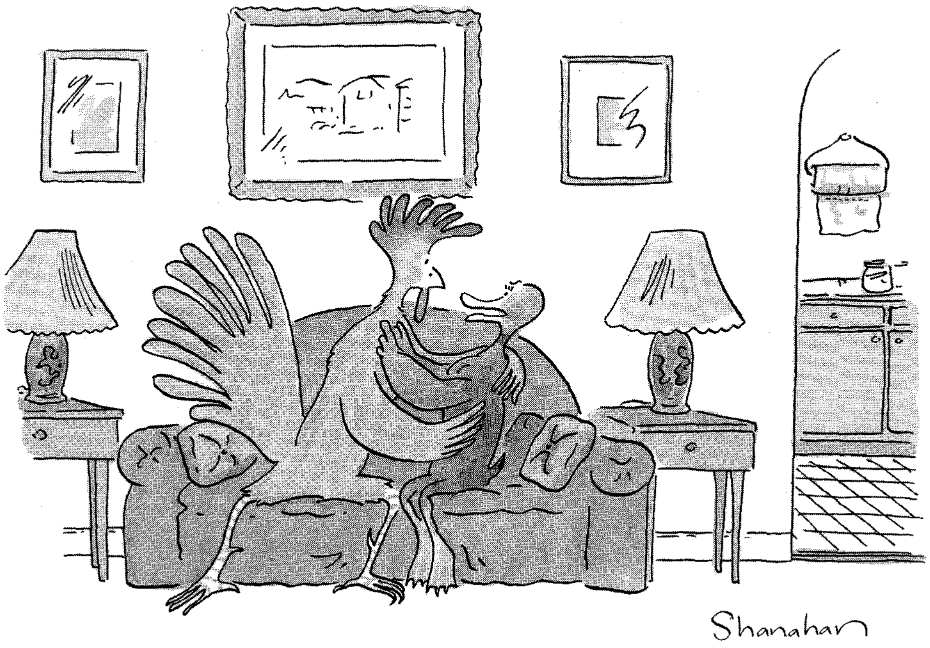
THE FINALISTS

"Two thousand eyes, but it still takes you all day to read the morning paper."
Ryan McCarroll, Los Angeles, Calif.

"Would your mother find chilled larvae in a light honey glaze too waspy?"
Dan Evans, Los Angeles, Calif.

"Well, it's another thrilling night at the Samsas'."
Adam Stevenson, Salisbury, Md.

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



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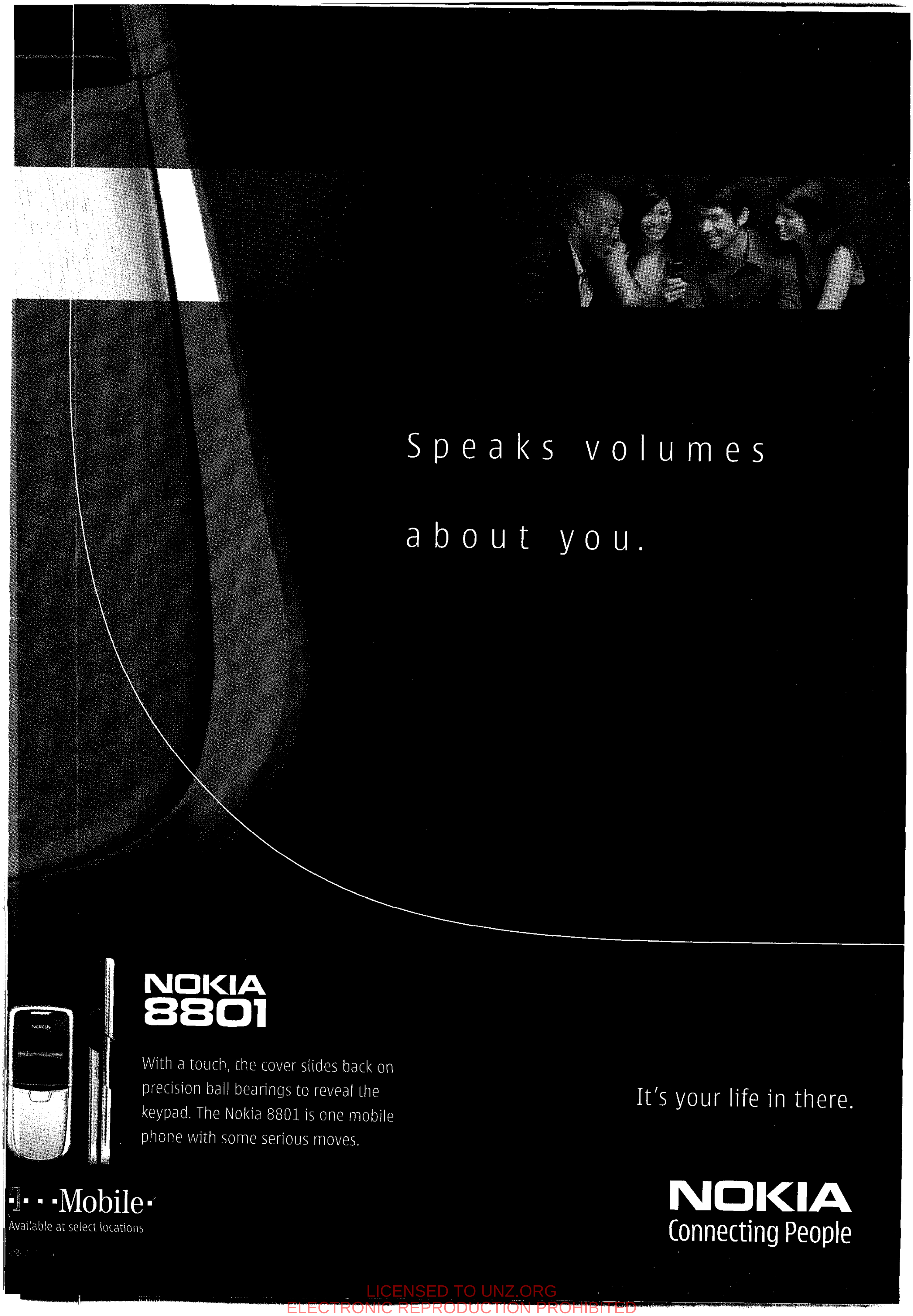

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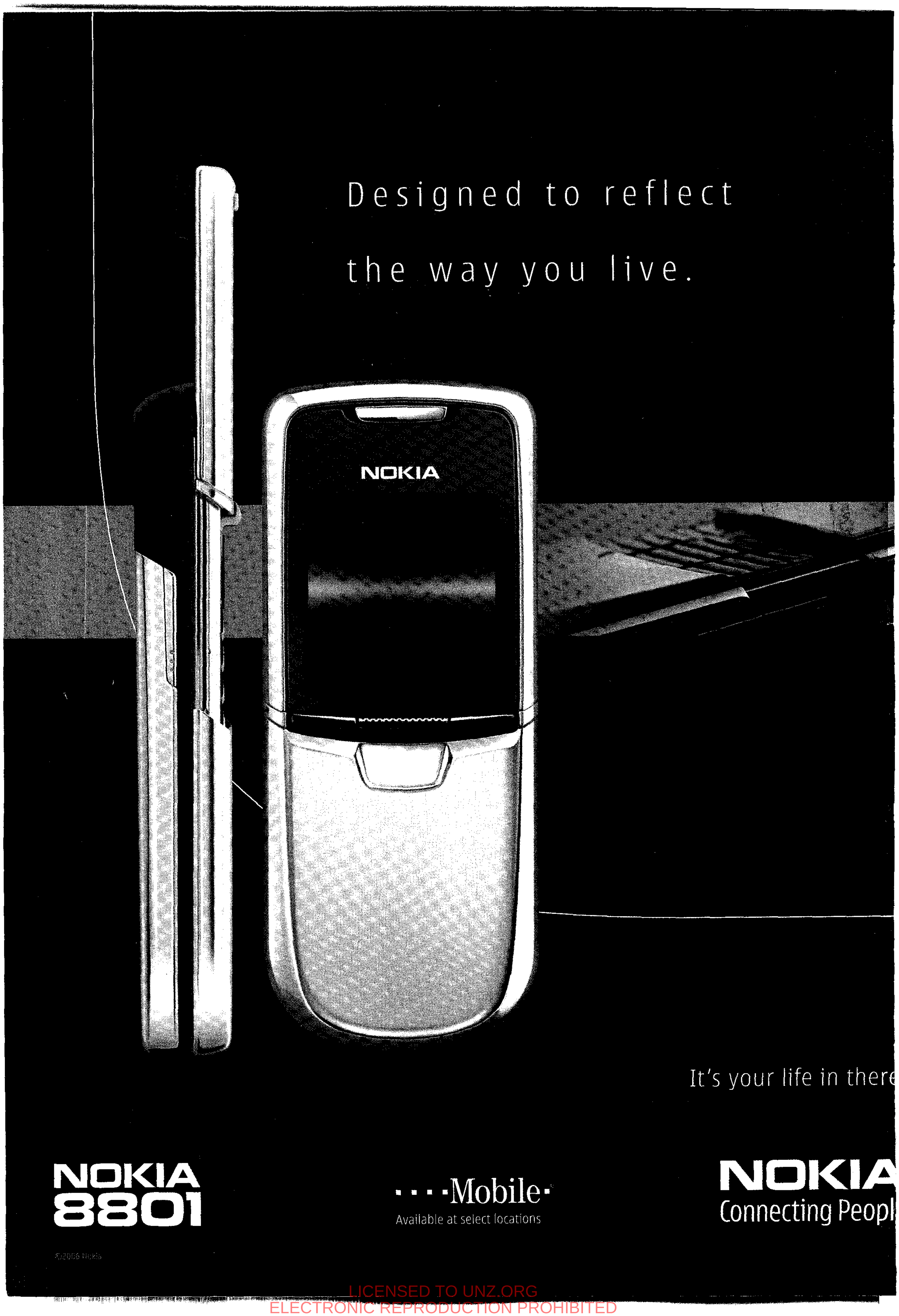
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